



TO: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

FROM: John L. D'Agati 

SUBJECT: St. Bonaventure University: Master plan amendment to offer a Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) degree program in Feature Film Production

DATE: April 26, 2018

AUTHORIZATION(S): 

SUMMARY

Issue for Decision (Consent Agenda)

Should the Board of Regents approve a master plan amendment for St. Bonaventure University to offer its first masters-level program in the Fine Arts discipline area, a Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) in Feature Film Production?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State statute and regulation.

Proposed Handling

The question will come before the full Board at its May 2018 meeting where it will be voted on and action taken. The Regents will consider separately a charter amendment to authorize the University to award the M.F.A. degree.

Procedural History

St. Bonaventure University has submitted a proposal for a Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) in Feature Film Production. A master plan amendment is required because the proposed program will be the University's first masters-level program in the Fine Arts discipline area.

Background Information

St. Bonaventure University seeks a master plan amendment to allow it to offer a Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) degree in Feature Film Production. A master plan amendment is required because this would be the University's first masters-level program in the Fine Arts discipline area. Regents authorization is required because the University is not authorized to offer the M.F.A. degree.

The proposed M.F.A. in Feature Film Production program at St. Bonaventure will teach theoretical and practical filmmaking to a select group of qualified individuals by having them participate, under the direct supervision of industry professionals, in the production of an independent narrative feature length film suitable for an international theatrical distribution. Unique features of the program include:

1. The opportunity to participate in the production of a feature film
2. The opportunity to profit from that feature film
3. The opportunity to interact with working industry professionals

A program director has been identified. At least two full-time faculty members and one part-time faculty member, to start, will work out of planned space in NYC. Three current full-time faculty members are immediately available to teach in the program.

The curriculum for the M.F.A. program in Feature Film Production consists of 33 credit hours of study (11 courses) including a capstone requirement, delivered in a cohort model. Four traditional sequential stages in feature film production: development, pre-production, production, and post-production will be covered. The course of study will be conducted over 12 consecutive months. One class will be offered on the main St. Bonaventure University campus. The projected enrollment for the program is anticipated to be 60 full-time students per year, with one start per academic year in January.

An academic review of faculty, curriculum and other program elements has been completed by the Department. The Department has determined that the proposed degree program meets the curriculum and student support standards for registration as set forth in the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. In consideration of the financial commitment required to secure space in New York City, the Department is recommending the approval of the master plan amendment first. Program registration will be withheld pending evidence of the University's procurement of space and equipment suitable for program needs.

In January 2018, following its standard protocol, the Department conducted a canvass of institutions of higher education in the New York City region. Two responses were received. One offered no objection. The second, from the CUNY system, concerning questions of need was resolved by St. Bonaventure.

Related Regent's Items

N/A

Recommendation

VOTED: That the Board of Regents approve a master plan amendment to authorize St. Bonaventure University to offer its first masters-level program in the Fine Arts discipline area, a Master of Fine Arts (M.F.A.) in Feature Film Production. The amendment will be effective until May 9, 2019, 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 upon confirmation of evidence that the University has secured appropriate space and facilities.