



TO: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

FROM: John L. D'Agati *John L. D'Agati*

SUBJECT: Villa Maria College of Buffalo: Master Plan Amendment to authorize the College to offer a Bachelor of Business Administration (B.B.A.) degree program in Business Administration

DATE: December 3, 2012

AUTHORIZATION(S): *John L. D'Agati*
SUMMARY

Issue for Decision (Consent Agenda)

Should the Board of Regents approve an amendment to the master plan of Villa Maria College of Buffalo authorizing the College to offer a Bachelor of Business Administration (B.B.A.) degree program in Business Administration? A charter amendment authorizing the College to award the B.B.A. degree title is also on the Board's agenda.

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State regulation.

Proposed Handling

This question will come before the full Board at its December 2012 meeting where it will be voted on and action taken.

Procedural History

Villa Maria College of Buffalo submitted a proposal for a Bachelor of Business Administration (B.B.A.) degree program in Business Administration in September 2011.

Master plan amendment is required because this will be the institution's first baccalaureate degree in the disciplinary area of Business.

Background Information

Villa Maria College is a degree-granting independent institution located in Buffalo, New York, offering associate degree programs in the areas of business, fine arts, education, and the physical sciences; and baccalaureate degree programs in the fine arts, humanities, and interior design. In the fall of 2011, 457 students were enrolled in the College.

Purpose and Goals: The goal of the program is to give students the ability to recognize, analyze, communicate, and implement ethical business strategies in a diverse marketplace. The program is intended to complement the College's existing degree programs in art and music, specifically the baccalaureate programs in Fashion Design and Merchandising and Music Industry.

Curriculum: Students will complete a 57-credit core of coursework emphasizing accounting, management, marketing, finance and law that will give students the ability to apply economic, quantitative, and qualitative methods of analysis to problem-solving in a wide range of business scenarios. The opportunity for an internship will give students a chance to apply classroom learning to real business situations. A broad liberal arts base will provide students with needed critical thinking skills, as well as exposure to a variety of subjects that foster an appreciation for diversity in the marketplace.

Faculty: Courses in the major of the proposed program will be taught by two full-time instructors and one part-time instructor, all currently employed by the College, all of whom hold M.B.A. degrees. Prior to launching the program, the College will hire an additional full-time faculty member with a doctorate in marketing or a marketing-related field to teach in the proposed program.

Admissions: Admission requirements to the proposed program are the same as those for admission to the College, i.e., a high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma.

Students: The student body of the proposed program is expected to grow from an initial number of 15 to about 75 within 5 years of the program's start. The characteristics of the student body are expected to mirror that of the College as a whole: 82 percent from Erie County and 11 percent from the rest of the Western New York Region; 65 percent women, 28 percent minority, 31 percent first in their family to attend college, 49 percent with no parents who hold a college degree, and 11 percent disabled.

Resources: The College has a range of lecture-style classrooms as well as smaller seminar rooms, several computer labs, an Academic Success Center that can accommodate student needs for tutoring. The Library collection supports the business courses with print materials, audio-visual materials, and a range of online databases.

Employment prospects: Graduates will be qualified for entry-level positions in a wide variety of public and private sector careers that require knowledge of analytical business methods and strong communication and writing skills. These include careers in the

growth areas of: advertising, marketing, promotions, public relations, and retail management; agent and business management for the arts; market research analysis and management analysis. Students will also be well prepared for graduate study in business, law, and other fields that require a liberal arts foundation and significant analytical abilities.

Finances: The Department's Office of Audit Services conducted a review of the College's audited financial statements for the year ending June 30, 2012, and indicated that over the past decade, the College's federal composite score has shown the institution to be financially healthy.

Need: The College's Admissions Office recorded 961 inquiries regarding baccalaureate degree programs in business, management, marketing, and accounting during an eight-month period in 2011. The College indicates that the proposed program is a response to the educational needs of potential students as expressed in these inquiries. In addition, according to statistics gathered by the NYS Department of Labor, "Professional and business services" was the fourth fastest growing job sector in Western New York from 2010 to 2011, adding over 900 jobs in that year. Department of Labor statistics further indicate that the local job market in Western New York has strengthened, as more and more companies are hiring. The Governor's Regional Council initiative is also expected to contribute to job growth in Western New York State.

Planning Review: The Department conducted a canvass of all colleges and universities in the Western region; there were two responses. One respondent had no objections, while the second (Medaille College) objected and requested a public hearing. Following further correspondence and discussion between the two colleges, Medaille College withdrew its objection and its request for a hearing.

Department Review: The Department has determined that the program, if approved, would meet registration standards.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Regents approve a master plan amendment to authorize Villa Maria College of Buffalo to offer its first baccalaureate degree in the discipline of Business. This amendment will be effective until December 31, 2013, 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 approves this master plan amendment, the Department will register the program and the College will proceed to recruit and enroll students.