



TO: The Honorable the Members of the Board of Regents

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

SUBJECT: Master Plan Amendment: Clarkson University,
Establishment of Schenectady Branch Campus and
Related Programs in the Education, Humanities, and
Social Sciences Disciplines

DATE: July 13, 2015

AUTHORIZATION(S): *Mary Ellen Eina*

SUMMARY

Issue for Decision (Consent Agenda)

Should the Board of Regents approve a master plan amendment to authorize Clarkson University to establish a branch campus in Schenectady, which would include the University's first degree programs in the education discipline and first master's degree programs in the humanities and social sciences disciplines?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State Regulation.

Proposed Handling

This question will come before the full Board at its July 2015 meeting, where it will be voted on and action taken.

Procedural History

A master plan amendment is required because Clarkson proposes to establish a branch campus in Schenectady that would include the institution's first degree programs in the education discipline and first master's degree programs in the humanities and social sciences disciplines.

Background Information

Union Graduate College ("UGC") intends to merge into Clarkson University (Potsdam). The merged entity would continue to be called Clarkson University, and the

former Union Graduate College would become a branch campus of Clarkson University at UGC's location in Schenectady. A related petition for a charter amendment to effect this merger will also be before the Board at the July meeting. No new programs are being proposed, but Regents approval of a master plan amendment for Clarkson University is needed for the following reasons, as Clarkson assumes responsibility for UGC's students, faculty, programs and facilities:

1. To establish the Clarkson University Capital Region branch campus at the former site of Union Graduate College (Schenectady);
2. To authorize Clarkson's first programs in the education discipline;
3. To authorize Clarkson's first master's degree in the humanities discipline; and
4. To authorize Clarkson's first master's degree in the social sciences discipline.

Clarkson University and UGC have collaborated to make the merger as seamless as possible for all parties, including UGC's 611 students. Clarkson would operate the UGC programs where they are currently offered, with their current calendars, and with the current curriculum and faculty. This includes several multiple-institution programs, which Clarkson and the partnering institutions have agreed to continue.

Through the State's registration process, UGC degree programs would become Clarkson degree programs. The title of the degrees, purpose and goals of the programs, curricula, requirements for admission, nature of the prospective student body, enrollment numbers, facilities, and prospects for employment would be unchanged. The Capital Region campus would be the headquarters for administration of professional graduate programs, including recruitment and admissions functions.

The Clarkson Capital Region campus would be headed by a Vice President for Professional Programs. The Vice President would report directly to the President of Clarkson University and have three major roles: (1) administration of professional graduate programs; (2) oversight of the daily operations of the Schenectady campus; and (3) supervision of legacy UGC programs. Functional areas such as Finance and IT would report to their Potsdam leads, but also retain a dotted-line reporting relationship to the Vice President. The balance of central authority versus local supervision would vary depending on the function; buildings and grounds are almost completely a Schenectady concern, while compliance with audit requirements will require the Finance Offices to be tightly linked across campuses. UGC budgets and finances would be absorbed into Clarkson budgets and finances. (Note: the Department's review of the institutions' audited financial statements found both institutions to be financially healthy.)

Tenured UGC faculty would retain their tenure under Clarkson, and all other faculty contracts (pre-tenured, term, or part-time) would be honored as well. All faculty would be appointed to home academic departments based on the Potsdam campus. "Local Area Coordinators" in Schenectady would handle routine matters of assigning faculty to classes, vetting adjuncts, etc. When faculty in Schenectady are up for tenure or promotion, all faculty in the academic department would have a voice in the decision, but the Local Area Coordinator would provide an independent evaluation and local insight.

Similarly, all programs would continue to be supervised by faculty committees. All learning objectives and outcomes assessments currently in place would remain in place for the immediate future. Clarkson would gain, for the first time, programs and faculty in education. They would be absorbed into Clarkson's existing School of Arts and Sciences, where they are expected to enhance Clarkson's participation in various STEM education initiatives. Clarkson also would gain, for the first time, graduate programs and faculty in humanities and social sciences. These programs would be a natural fit in the existing Department of Humanities and Social Sciences.

The outcomes of the merger are consistent with the *Clarkson@125* strategic plan, which calls for doubling the number of graduate students as a way to enhance research and reputation. Overall, Clarkson expects that the merger would enrich the pool of resources for students and faculty from the combined Potsdam and Capital Region campuses, thus enhancing collaboration, research, and course offerings.

In support of the master planning process, and in light of the unique circumstances of the proposed merger, the Department canvassed institutions in both the Capital and North Country regions. No institutions objected to the proposed merger or master plan action.

If the Regents approve this master plan amendment, as of January 1, 2016, upon completion of the merger, the Department will register the UGC programs at the Clarkson University Capital Region branch campus. Union Graduate College and its programs will remain on the Department's Inventory of Registered Programs for a period of 18 months to support UGC students who wish to complete their programs with a UGC award.

Recommendation

VOTED, that the Board of Regents approve an amendment to the master plan of Clarkson University to authorize the establishment of a branch campus in Schenectady, including the institution's first degree programs in the education discipline and first master's degree programs in the humanities and social sciences disciplines. The amendment will become effective on January 1, 2016 and remain effective until January 1, 2017, unless the Department registers the programs 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 UGC programs at the Clarkson University Capital Region branch campus upon completion of the merger.