

**COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Education and Student Affairs Committee, Board of Regents, State of Iowa  
**FROM:** Diana Gonzalez  
**DATE:** June 1, 2005 *ASN*  
**SUBJ:** Proposal for a Baccalaureate of Applied Studies Program at the University of Iowa

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**Recommended Action:**

Approve the University of Iowa's proposal to establish a new Baccalaureate of Applied Studies (BAS) program.

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**Executive Summary:**

The proposed program will allow graduates of Iowa community college applied science programs to complete a baccalaureate degree at the University of Iowa using a distance education format. The Regent universities have a long history of providing a variety of learning opportunities for non-traditional students who are place- or work-bound, including the following:

- ◇ The Bachelor of Liberal Studies is an external degree offered by the three Regent universities for associate of arts and associate of science community college graduates.
  - ◇ The baccalaureate completion program offered by the SUI College of Nursing allows associate of applied science nursing graduates to complete their bachelor of science in nursing program as distance learners.
  - ◇ UNI's articulation agreement with each Iowa community college in the industrial technology area allows students to complete their bachelor's degree.
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Gap

Several years ago, the Board of Regents' Priority Study Group on distance/distributive education asked the Regent universities to address the gap of program completion opportunities available in a distance education format for Iowa community college graduates who completed associate of applied science programs.

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Multi-Sector Input Using input from the Board's 2 + 2 Council as well as from the community colleges, the University of Iowa designed the proposed program in a distance education format to fit the needs and experiences of AAS graduates who have been in the workforce for at least three years.

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Proposed Program To complete the proposed BAS degree, students must earn a total of 120 credit hours, including a minimum of 30 credit hours after entering the program. The student must complete 45 credit hours of upper division work, as well as 12 credit hours in three of the following distribution areas – humanities; communication and arts; natural sciences and math; social sciences; and professional fields. Instruction will be provided through distance education, including the WWW and the ICN, in order to make the program available to students regardless of their place of residence.

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**Background:**

The Board Office reviewed the University's responses to the Board of Regents' criteria for new program approval and determined that the proposed program appears to meet the Board's minimum requirements.

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Duplication There are no other universities or colleges in Iowa that provide baccalaureate programs specifically oriented toward graduates of community college associate of applied science programs. While there are a number of Iowa private colleges and universities that offer multidisciplinary programs, none has a degree program available on a statewide basis offered with the convenience of web delivery. No objections were raised when this proposal was submitted to the Iowa Coordinating Council for Post-High School Education (ICCPHSE).

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Need/Demand During the past four years, there have been approximately 15,000 associate of applied science graduates from Iowa community colleges. The proposed program will serve these graduates and others who wish to obtain a four-year degree. The program is designed for working adults who wish to improve their skills and opportunities for advancement while remaining employed and place-bound.

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Quality This program has been designed to fit the needs and experiences of AAS graduates who have been in the workforce for at least three years. The program should be of greatest interest to mid-level employees in technical areas who are successful in their work and who find that they need more advanced training and a four-year degree in order to be promoted or to take on greater responsibility. BAS students may also select courses from the College of Public Health and earn a Certificate in Public Health while pursuing the BAS degree. The program will be offered under the auspices of the Office of the Provost as a University College degree.

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Cost	According to the University, additional funding will not be needed. Advising will be conducted by existing staff and existing courses will be used. As colleges add to their pool of distance education courses, these will become available to BAS students.
Employer Demand for Training	Employers of associate of applied science graduates regularly request training opportunities which will provide these employees with the skills and competencies which will allow them to take on greater responsibility.
Link to Strategic Planning	The proposed program addresses the University's strategic plan goal to "create a University experience that enriches the lives of undergraduates and helps them to become well-informed individuals, lifelong learners, engaged citizens, and productive employees and employers." The proposed program is also consistent with the Board's strategic plan priority to "ensure high-quality educational opportunities for students" (Priority 1.0).
COP Recommendation	The Council of Provosts (COP) has reviewed this request and is recommending approval.
Future Program Development	The potential exists for the other Regent universities to develop the same or similar program should the need warrant such efforts.
Regent Program Review Questions	The University's responses to the Regent New Program Review Questions and to the Principles and Standards for Program Duplication are attached (pages 4-7).
Endorsement	This proposed program has been discussed with the Iowa Association of Community College Trustees and has been endorsed by the Iowa Community College presidents and their respective chief academic officers.
Recommendation	Approve the University of Iowa's proposal to establish a baccalaureate of applied studies program.

# BACHELOR OF APPLIED STUDIES PROGRAM

## University of Iowa

### 6.05 Academic Review and Program Approval

Contact Person: Dean Chet Rzonca, Division of Continuing Education

1. Need for the program
  - a. How will this proposed program further the educational and curriculum needs of the students in this discipline?

A major concern of the Board of Regents Priority Study Group (PSG) on distance/distributive education was the lack of degree completion options for Associate of Applied Science (AAS) graduates. Table 1 in the proposal (page 4) shows that the number of students who might be served by such a program is comparable to the number earning the AA degree. Given this large number of AAS degree holders and the strong interest of community colleges in having such degree completion paths available for AAS graduates, the 2+2 Council spent considerable time during 2003-2004 exploring whether such a program could be begun soon. The proposed Bachelor of Applied Studies (BAS) was created to fill this perceived need.

The BAS will serve adult learners who have completed a two-year applied degree such as the Associate of Applied Science and who now wish to complete a four-year degree. The degree is designed for people who are already in the work force and who now wish to improve their skills and value as employees while remaining employed. Instruction will be provided via distance education in order to make the degree available to potential students wherever they may be.

- b. How does it further the educational and curriculum needs of other units in the college of university?

Although the BAS is not intended to further curricular needs of other units on campus, it is a strong companion to the Bachelor of Liberal Studies that currently offers a completion path for place-bound students who have previously earned the associate of arts (AA) degree. It is also similar to the RN-BSN program that allows students who earned their RN degrees at community colleges to complete the BSN via distance education.

2. Duplication and Collaboration

a. What programs in this field of study are available in other colleges and universities in Iowa?

We do not believe that this proposed distance degree duplicates other programs at Regent institutions. Related programs are:

- ◇ The Bachelor of Liberal Studies (BLS, available at all three Regent institutions) is intended for AA holders who have completed a standard set of general education requirements at a community college. AAS degree-holders do not have the prerequisites for admission to BLS programs.
- ◇ The University of Northern Iowa offers a baccalaureate degree in Industrial Technology to students who have earned an AAS degree in industrial or electronic technology. This is, for the most part, an on-campus program.
- ◇ The University of Iowa also offers a degree completion program (RN-BSN) for students who have completed the RN at two-year institutions.

b. With what representatives of these programs has there been consultation in developing this proposal? Provide a summary of the responses of each institution consulted.

The possibility of a BAS degree was discussed during development by the 2+2 Committee which includes representatives of all three Regent institutions as well as representatives of the community colleges. Although all three institutions recognized the usefulness of such a program in Iowa, only The University of Iowa was able to launch such a program at present.

The BLS was also mentioned at the December meeting of the Board of Regents as part of the report of the 2+2 Council to the Education and Student Affairs Committee.

c. In what ways is this proposed program similar to those mentioned in 2a? In what ways is it different or does it have a different emphasis?

The program is similar to all three programs mentioned in 2a in that it offers a completion path for students who have a 2-year degree. However, it is aimed specifically at those with an AAS or other applied degree (unlike the BLS and RN-BSN program) and it is available entirely as a distance program (unlike the UNI program).

d. How does the proposed program supplement the current programs available?

This program has been designed very carefully to fit the needs and experiences of AAS graduates who have been in the workforce for at least three years. We anticipate that the program will be of greatest interest to mid-level employees in technical areas who are successful in their work and who find that they need more advanced training and a four-year degree in order to be promoted or to take on greater responsibility in their work. We believe that The University of Iowa already has the resources to make this completion degree available and accessible across the state at low cost to the degree-seekers.

- e. Has the possibility of some kind of inter-institutional program or other cooperative effort been explored? What are the results of this study?

At meetings of the 2+2 Council we thoroughly discussed whether the degree could or should be begun at all three institutions at the same time. As it happened, the Division of Continuing Education at Iowa was uniquely situated to offer a cross-collegiate degree without the addition of new resources. The 2+2 Council agreed to have Iowa take the lead on the BAS with the understanding that we would welcome similar degrees from the other two Regent institutions when it became feasible for them to develop such.

- f. Please list the Iowa institutions in which articulation agreements are being developed for the proposed program. (NOTE: This applies only to community college degree programs which may transfer students to this program.)

No articulation agreements are being drawn at this time. We anticipate that the program will be open to AAS graduates of all Iowa community colleges.

- g. Please provide the Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) Code for the proposed program.

CIP code: 30.999 (Multi/interdisciplinary studies)

3. Please estimate the enrollment in this program for the next five years as follows:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
a. Undergraduate					
Majors	5	10	25	50	50
Nonmajors	0	0	0	0	0
b. Graduate					
Majors	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Nonmajors	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

- c. On what basis were these estimates made?

Estimate based on current enrollment in the BLS program at Iowa (50 students approximately). The BAS may be smaller at first since it is newer but may grow to exceed the BLS if it remains the only program of its kind in Iowa.

- d. What are the anticipated sources of these students?

We expect that BAS students will be new students who are currently working and not enrolled in higher education as degree seeking students.

- e. The proposal (p. 8) cites a report called *The Education Pipeline: Big Investment, Big Return* that was recently released by The National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. Several benefits of encouraging a college-educated population are given there.

5. Are there accreditation standards for this program?

There would be no accreditation standards for such a program.

6. Does the proposed program meet minimal national standards for the program, e.g., Council of Graduate School or other such bodies?

We believe this program meets minimal national standards.

7. Please report any reactions of the Iowa Coordinating Council for Post-High School Education. List date that the program information was submitted to the Council.

The proposal was submitted for review by ICCPHSE on March 22, 2005; there were no objections raised to the proposal.

Additional resource needs:

1. Will the program require new resources? No.

2. Will the program require reallocated resources? Yes.

As explained on page 7 of the proposal, the degree will require no new courses. There will be a need for student advising but this can be handled by the existing BLS staff.

3. At what level of enrollment will additional resources be required for the program?

If the degree becomes very successful (considerably more than 50 students) additional advising help might be needed, but this is unlikely to occur soon. The program will also require a faculty advisory board representing the various colleges contributing coursework. This participation will not require monetary resources since activity of this sort is considered to be a regular duty of faculty members.

4. Estimate the total costs (or incremental increases in expenditures) that may be necessary as a result of the new program for the next three years.

We estimate no incremental costs in the next three years.

5. For programs planning to use external grants, what would be the effect of the grant termination?

Not applicable.

6. Iowa's strategic plan "The Iowa Promise" includes a section of Engagement in which we specifically state our intention of "strategically delivering degree programs, lifelong learning, continuing education, and professional development courses to Iowans and Iowa businesses through on-campus and distance education offerings." The BAS is a prime example of how The University of Iowa can meet our responsibilities in this important area.