

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

REQUEST FOR A NEW PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
BACHELOR OF ARTS PROGRAM IN ETHICS AND PUBLIC POLICY

Action Requested: Consider approval of the request by the University of Iowa to establish a new Bachelor of Arts Program in Ethics and Public Policy which will be administered by the Department of Philosophy in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Executive Summary: The proposed program will provide a cross-disciplinary approach that will connect the study of philosophy, economics, law, and sociology. This proposal was reviewed by the Board Office and the Council of Provosts and is recommended for approval. No concerns were raised when it was presented to the Iowa Coordinating Council for Post-High School Education. The proposed program addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priority (1.0) to “ensure high-quality educational opportunities for students.”

Background:

- ◇ **Description of program.** Using a cross-disciplinary approach, the proposed program will focus on normative questions concerning how individuals ought to behave and how the behavior of others should be regulated. The proposed program is expected to provide a unique perspective for students interested in working in such diverse fields as government, urban and regional planning, social work, business, and law. Students will gain experience in examining social and political questions from a variety of disciplinary perspectives and in reading, speaking, critical analysis, and abstract and logical reasoning.
- ◇ **Relationship to existing programs.** If approved, the proposed program will replace the Philosophies and Ethics of Politics, Law, and Economics (PEOPLE) certificate offered by the department. The certificate program was created in 1996 to help students understand and evaluate how institutionalized values influence each other. Enrollment in the certificate has been limited because it requires a total of 36 semester hours. The proposed program will allow interested students to complete a major in this field as well as to combine it with another major in one of the participating departments.
- ◇ **Duplication.** There are no other institutions in the state that offer the same program.
- ◇ **Student demand.** The proposed program will appeal to students who have expressed interest in the PEOPLE certificate but who have not been able to undertake the program due to credit hour requirements. Currently, there are approximately 25 students in the certificate program. Other students have expressed interest in the certificate program but they have been dissuaded by requirements that are more extensive than many of the majors they are considering. The proposed program is expected to be particularly appealing to students who anticipate attending law school.
- ◇ **Unique features.** The proposed program will bring together scholars from philosophy, economics, and sociology. The faculty members in the proposed program have significant records of research at the cutting edge in their respective fields.

- ◇ Model for proposed program. Yale University offers an undergraduate program in Ethics, Politics, and Economics which is designed “to foster informed debate about public policy in the light of disciplined reflection on the fundamentals of human association. The program was created in the belief that, for all the value of specialized fields and sub-disciplines, these should not displace attempts to integrate empirical, analytical and normative concerns that range over different disciplines in the modern university.”
- ◇ Resources. The University anticipates that no new resources will be needed. The proposed program is expected to draw exclusively on existing resources by using courses taught on a regular basis.
- ◇ Cost. The University has indicated that there will be no additional costs associated with the proposed program.
- ◇ Projected enrollment. The projected enrollment is 20-30 students in Year 1, increasing to 40-50 students by Year 7.
- ◇ Link to institutional strategic plan. The proposed program addresses SUI’s 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.”