

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST FOR NEW PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA:
BACHELOR OF APPLIED STUDIES PROGRAM IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

Action Requested: Consider approval of the request by the University of Northern Iowa to establish a new Bachelor of Applied Studies Program in Criminal Justice in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminology in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Executive Summary: The proposed program will provide an opportunity for community college graduates to complete a bachelor's degree. 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 priorities to "provide educational excellence and impact as well as economic development and vitality" and Goal #8 – "Iowa's public universities and special schools shall be increasingly efficient and productive."

Background:

- ◇ **Description of proposed program.** The proposed program is designed primarily to meet the needs of working professionals who completed an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree and who need to complete a bachelor's degree for career advancement. The BAS program will include fields of study that build directly upon the student's experiences in their profession, as well as their coursework from their community college AAS degrees. These will tend to be the more "applied" or "professional" programs at UNI, and the BAS programs will be tailored to further the careers of the students. The program areas are strengths at UNI, which will make these programs more attractive to students, and more valuable to the state in terms of providing those with technical expertise a pathway to a four-year degree that appropriately prepares them for leadership positions in the workplace. It is anticipated that these programs will be offered primarily online, in order to provide maximum access to those in Iowa's workforce who are looking to advance their careers and knowledge through additional college education.

- ◇ **Academic objectives.** The BAS in Criminal Justice at UNI will be geared toward persons with an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree. The majority of these students would currently be working in the criminal justice system, but desire a four year degree for either professional advancement, promotion or personal achievement. The academic objectives of the program are as follows:
 - ⇒ To provide a pathway for AAS degree students to complete a four year degree at UNI in less time than it currently takes;
 - ⇒ To offer an online environment for place-bound students who wish to complete their degree;
 - ⇒ To expose AAS students to criminal justice content that is relevant to all career paths in the field;
 - ⇒ To improve writing and communication skills of students in the program; and
 - ⇒ To increase students' ability to use critical thinking skills while on the job.

- ◇ Need for proposed program. The proposed program will be an option for those individuals who have completed a two-year AAS degree and now seek to get a four-year degree that will allow them to have opportunities in supervision and management positions. The BAS program will achieve the following:
 - ⇒ Provide a streamlined, understandable pathway for AAS degree students to complete a four-year degree in contrast with the arduous process of program-to-program articulation model;
 - ⇒ Offer flexible learning options, including online coursework, for place-bound students who wish to complete their bachelor's degree;
 - ⇒ Build upon students' technical and applied skills from their AAS degree and related work experience, with a strong general education core and upper level coursework that builds upon previous coursework;
 - ⇒ Improve students' written and oral communication workplace and managerial skills; and
 - ⇒ Increase students' abilities to use critical thinking skills while on the job.

For the BAS in Criminal Justice, UNI solicited the services of the Education Advisory Board, a consulting company, who undertook a market research analysis to assess the viability of such a program at UNI. According to EAB, there is regional demand for this program with several Iowa community colleges offering an AAS degree. The university has partnered with Hawkeye Community College, which offers an AAS in police science. They not only expressed interest, but were also excited about the opportunities a BAS at UNI would give to their AAS students. They expressed that there is, and will be, student demand for a BAS in criminal justice at UNI that Hawkeye students can feed into. In addition to Hawkeye Community College, there has been expressed interest across the state from other community colleges.

Graduates of the proposed program will be able to (a) write and speak effectively in a workplace setting; (b) use quantitative and scientific data to address diverse problems and situations; (c) use methods of critical inquiry to describe and analyze human behavior from a variety of perspectives; (d) develop knowledge of the complex interplay of culture, history, and human experience; and (e) link theory and research to participate in problem-solving in a variety of settings.

- ◇ Link to institutional strategic plan. UNI is committed to expanding access to affordable, high-quality educational opportunities, as well as promoting economic development in the state of Iowa. UNI has developed a strong pathway for community college graduates to earn a four-year degree. About a third of the UNI student body is comprised of transfer students. This commitment is reinforced by the fact that more than 90% of UNI's students are from Iowa, and the vast majority of UNI's graduates stay and work in Iowa. Thus, UNI can act as an important conduit for Iowa's community college students as they work toward their four-year degrees and contribute to the economic vitality of the state.

The proposed program aligns with UNI's strategic plan. According to the Office of the Provost website, UNI's vision is that "The University of Northern Iowa will be nationally known for innovative education, preparing students for success in a rapidly changing, globally competitive, and culturally diverse world." An online BAS program offers innovative education for the State of Iowa. The program will result in more highly qualified employees in Iowa's workforce, employees who, after taking this program, will have increased their critical thinking, verbal, and written communication skills.

In particular, the proposed program addresses Goal 1 of the university, to “be a leading undergraduate public university that provides a strong liberal arts foundation,” and Goal 5, “enhance the economic, social, cultural, and sustainable development of the state.” The program helps “provide support for the economic, social, and sustainable development priorities of Iowa” (G5.O2.S1) and “supports workforce development by assisting state and regional workforce initiatives, including those that serve refugee and immigrant populations” (G5.O2.S3). In addition, the program supports Goal 6 of the university, to “ensure accountability, affordability, and access” by increasing “the number of non-traditional and distance learners” (G6.O2), and strengthening “relationships with community colleges to improve transfer students’ transition process” (G6.O2.S3).

- ◇ Relationship to existing programs at UNI. The proposed program will enhance degree attainment, since those with an AAS degree who intend to complete a four-year degree at UNI are subject to an array of narrowly focused articulation agreements, which creates confusion for students. This is in contrast to the relatively easy transfer of students with Associate of Arts degrees (AA), which automatically are counted as an equivalent to UNI's Liberal Arts Core (essentially the first two years of a standard four-year bachelor's degree).

In this area for the BAS, there are majors available for more traditional students (e.g., Criminology) but these require students to complete the standard general education requirements which are required of our current students. The BAS major will have a compressed, distributed liberal arts core to complete (21-30 hours), because students will already have met many of the core requirements in their AAS degree. In addition, their major will be at most 30 credit hours, and their LAC/electives will be 30 hours, allowing students to complete the BAS degree in 60 hours.

- ◇ Relationship to existing programs at other colleges and universities. There are a few similar programs to the proposed program, including the Bachelor of Applied Studies degree at the University of Iowa, the Bachelor of Applied Sciences degree (with an emphasis in Applied Management) at Buena Vista University, and the Bachelor of Applied Sciences degrees at Waldorf College. The BASc Applied Management Major at Buena Vista University consists of 60 hours of credit, divided between 21 hours of core courses and 39 hours in the major.¹ It is a degree completion program and students with any associate degree from an accredited institution can qualify for the program. However, it does not have the emphasis on the Liberal Arts Core that is in UNI's program, which has 21-30 credit hours.

Waldorf College offers Bachelor of Applied Sciences degrees in Business Administration, Communications, Criminal Justice, Criminal Justice Administration, Emergency Management, Fire Science Administration, Health Care Management, Homeland Security, Occupational Safety, Organizational Leadership, and Psychology. Their BAS degrees consist of 30 hours of general education requirements, 30 hours of major requirements, and 60 hours of professional electives taken at Waldorf College.² The major programs are somewhat similar to UNI's proposed program, in terms of makeup of the program however, there are several differences.

¹ <https://www.bvu.edu/gos/programs/bachelor-of-applied-science/basc-applied-management>.

² <http://waldorf.edu/online/academics/major-core-requirements/bachelor-of-applied-science>.

The University of Iowa Bachelor of Applied Studies program offers individualized general studies plans of 60 hours with optional emphasis areas (or certificates), ranging from 12-20 hours, in Entrepreneurial Management, Nonprofit Management, Public Health, Creative Writing, Human Relations, Justice Studies, and Political Science.

There is no Bachelor of Applied Sciences program at the three Iowa Regent universities. The BAS in Criminal Justice proposed at UNI is most similar to the BAS program at Waldorf College in terms of content but does differ in several respects. First, the UNI program is a degree completion program and is focused on recruiting AAS degree holders in contrast to BAS students from Waldorf College who complete the entire degree at the institution. The majority of the students who opt for the BAS in Criminal Justice would currently be working in the criminal justice system, but desire a four year degree for either professional advancement/promotion or personal achievement. UNI's program will consist of 30 credit hours of major/elective coursework and 30 credit hours of LAC courses.

- ◇ Unique features. UNI's mission to provide accessible education for multiple populations and its willingness to embrace growth in online education provides support for the development of the proposed program. UNI's focus on undergraduate education aligns with the university's strategic plan goals.

Regional comprehensive universities, such as UNI, are the desirable and appropriate type of institutions to house this type of degree program. The faculty at a comprehensive university emphasize teaching which can include significant community engagement. There are faculty who have been teaching online for some time, and have great support for online coursework development via UNI's Division of Continuing Education and Special Programs. Specifically for the BAS in Criminal Justice, UNI's Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology (SAC) has faculty that are recognized across the state and region. The Department also offers a traditional BA degree in Criminology. The faculty in the department will initially staff the new degree program and the BAS will gain from their breadth and depth of experience while the BA in Criminology can benefit from the interaction across types of students, possible connections made within the regional community.

- ◇ Resources. To implement the proposed program, online course development support will be available through the Division of Continuing Education and Special Programs. The initial investment of coursework for each cohort – two courses per semester, one from the major and one from the Liberal Arts Core – appears to be workable without an influx of additional resources for the onset of the program. As the program grows, there may be a need for a new faculty line for each increment of 60 new students and new support positions commensurate with additional work involved with support. This would be negotiated between the College Deans and the Provost.
- ◇ Student demand. The target audience for the proposed program includes the graduates of the Associate of Applied Science programs offered by Iowa's 15 community colleges. These graduates have typically used their AAS degree training to secure employment in their field of study at entry-level positions. After years of employment, many have advanced through the technical ranks and are either seeking or being asked to move into management, which typically requires a bachelor's degree. The proposed program will attract individuals with technical expertise and interest in the area of criminal justice who need the upper-level coursework to develop their management, communication and leadership skills.

BAS degrees have been successfully used in many universities outside of Iowa for this purpose, so there are good models to follow as the program is developed. Furthermore, interest identified through the Technology Management program articulates AAS degrees on a program-by-program basis. This program recently started with a full cohort of students and has recently accepted its third cohort.

In addition, UNI solicited the services of the Education Advisory Board (EAB), who undertook a market research analysis to assess the viability of a BAS Criminal Justice program at UNI. According to the EAB, there appears to be regional demand for the program within Iowa's 15 community colleges. The Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminology at UNI has already partnered with Hawkeye Community College, which offers an AAS in Police Science.

- ◇ Duplication. Waldorf College offers a Bachelor of Applied Sciences in Criminal Justice, Criminal Justice Administration, Emergency Management, Fire Science Administration, Homeland Security, and Occupational Safety. While UNI and Waldorf College have similar programs, the proposed program at UNI is a 60 credit hour degree completion program, while Waldorf College has a four-year completion program. However, both allow students to complete the degrees with an online delivery format.
- ◇ Workforce need/demand. According to the Iowa Department of Education Community College Division, there are approximately equivalent numbers of Associate of Applied Sciences (AAS) degrees granted from Iowa community colleges as there are Associate of Arts (AA) degrees. In particular, in the past five years, AAS degrees granted from Iowa community colleges have ranged from 4,406 to 5,223. A significant number of AAS degrees granted over the past five years is in law, public safety, and security; this information is relevant to the proposed program.
- ◇ Consultation with representatives of other programs. Formal consultations with the other Regent universities have not been undertaken because there is not a comparable degree at either SUI or ISU; however, this program has been presented to the Council of Provosts and communication with colleagues from both institutions has occurred with regard to sharing online courses for the programs. Informal conversations have occurred with representatives of Iowa's community colleges. Formal conversations have not occurred with private institutions. However, the proposed program at UNI was posted on the ICCPHSE listserv for review; there were no concerns or objections raised. Iowa State University recently received approval for a Bachelor of Arts Program in Criminal Justice; there will be an opportunity to collaborate and to potentially share online coursework.
- ◇ Cost. The total costs for the proposed program are expected to be \$160,000 in Year One, increasing to \$210,000 by Year Seven. The new costs are expected to be \$130,000 in Year One, increasing to \$180,000 by Year Seven. Programs offered through distance education are expected to be self-supporting with respect to the cost of instruction course delivery. Tuition revenues will be used to cover instructional expenses and support provided by the Office of Continuing and Distance Education. Significant growth in program enrollments will require additional resources in faculty lines and support positions.

- ◇ Projected enrollment. The enrollment is expected to be 20 students in Year One, increasing to 40 by Year Seven.
- ◇ Anticipated sources of students. The department anticipates that the recruitment will be primarily from the 15 Iowa community colleges. Contacts with the chief academic officers at the community colleges have begun through the university's community college networks and through the Liaison Advisory Committee on Transfer Students (LACTS).
- ◇ Articulation agreement. Articulation agreements will be pursued with the 15 Iowa community colleges.
- ◇ Off-campus delivery. Off-campus delivery is not planned initially. The proposed program will be offered primarily through online instruction by UNI faculty members. The program does not require additional HLC accreditation beyond approval of the program by the Board of Regents.
- ◇ Opportunities for internships. Internships will be an option in the proposed program.
- ◇ Marketing plan. Upon approval of the program, marketing brochures, e-mail communications developed through the Office of Continuing and Distance Education will be distributed to targeted AAS graduates. Lists will be developed in consultation with Iowa community colleges. The admissions counselors who advise transfer students will provide information to interested students at the community colleges. Communications between UNI faculty will occur with community college representatives.
- ◇ Evaluation plan. All programs must undergo the Academic Program Review process. Online course development support and student support services will be provided by the Division of Continuing Education and Special Programs.
- ◇ Date of implementation. Creation of the proposed program will become effective upon approval by the Board of Regents and will be included in the University's General Catalog. The anticipated implementation date is Fall 2016.