

Contact: Rachel Boon

**REQUEST FOR NEW PROGRAM AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY:  
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN EVENT MANAGEMENT**

**Action Requested:** Consider approval of the request by Iowa State University to establish a Master of Science in Event Management offered by the College of Human Sciences.

**Recommendation:** The Council of Provosts and Board office support approval of this program.

**Background:**

**Description of proposed program.** The proposed Masters in Event Management (EM) consists of 36 credits, including,

- 13 credits distributed over five required classes,
- 6 credits from EM electives,
- 6 credits from Hospitality Management courses,
- 5-6 credits from courses from other departments,
- 3 credits from Research Methods, and
- 3-4 credits from statistics courses.

Targeted individuals have responsibilities that are part of mid- and executive-level of event organizations or are event entrepreneurs that have an undergraduate degree in EM, hospitality management or another related field. Examples of roles and position titles where graduate education in EM would be required include Director of Meetings, Association Meeting Planners, Director of Sales, Executive Corporate Meeting Planners, and City Economic Officers. Furthermore, event and meeting planners work in a variety of sectors such as corporations, associations, government agencies, non-profit organizations, mega events (e.g., Olympics and Super Bowl), fairs/festivals, sports events and independent businesses/consultants. These roles and position titles often require a graduate degree, and this proposed degree will provide graduates with EM knowledge for leadership roles in the industry. Benefits of obtaining a Masters in Event Management include greater employment opportunities, professional development, networking opportunities, and greater recognition and credibility.

**Academic objectives.** The program will be designed using guidelines and recommendations of the Meeting and Business Event Competency Standards Curriculum Guide, a governing body that oversees event management curriculum. Upon successful completion of the Masters degree program in EM, students will be able to:

- create meeting and event plans based on research and analysis, trends, goals and objectives, larger organizational plans and financial resources; work within economic and social realities; and work within unique conditions in highly complex and unpredictable environments;
- analyze event and meeting risks and develop comprehensive risk management and emergency response plans to cover unpredictable and complex situations;
- design and build a range of revenue streams and manage financial processes and pricing;
- create and monitor human resource plans to achieve event and organizational goals, build teams, and develop training and development plans for staff, volunteers and other stakeholders;
- design program components and delivery formats and determine functional requirements;

- manage meeting and event site(s) by completing site inspections and selecting the best option(s); create site layouts/floor plans; develop the logistics plan; monitor the set-up, take-down and running of the event; and establish onsite communication protocol;
- integrate multidisciplinary social science theories to explain contemporary event management challenges and opportunities;
- engage in critical thinking, accept new models/paradigms, examine similarities and analogies, and recognize new priorities in the event management domain;
- understand the ethical, legal, societal, and economic concerns of event management; and
- visualize, interpret and communicate event management concepts to a variety of stakeholders.

Need for proposed program. This proposed online graduate program is possible because of the growing undergraduate EM program, started in 2011. The program is part of the Department of Apparel, Events, and Hospitality Management (AESHM) in the College of Human Sciences (CHS). There are only a handful of Masters programs in EM in the world, and this program will be one of the first graduate programs in EM in the United States.

This proposed program is warranted for three main reasons:

1. The continued growth and expansion of global events, meetings, sport events and festivals as well as the expansion of the entertainment industry calls for increased EM professionals. Employment for meeting, convention and event planners is projected to increase by 10% in the decade 2014 to 2024, faster than the average for all occupations, according to the United States Department of Labor (2017). Additional trends in the event industry include the experience economy/co-creation of experiences, commodification of event experiences, and the increased use of virtual events (Getz & Page, 2016).
2. Since the ISU Bachelor of Science in EM started in 2011, 426 students have graduated. Additionally, there are currently over 369 EM majors enrolled in the undergraduate program, and approximately 72 EM minors. Alumni work in a variety of roles throughout the state of Iowa, and AESHM receives inquiries about the creation of a Masters in Event Management on a frequent basis. Ninety-two percent of our EM bachelor's graduates have employment or are pursuing additional education within six months of graduation.
3. As a fully online program, the program will fit the needs and interests of students and professionals who are currently balancing employment, family and other needs.

Link to institutional strategic plan. The proposed Masters in EM aligns with the ISU mission to “create, share and apply knowledge to make Iowa and the world a better place” by providing event managers with knowledge to make stronger EM strategic and managerial decisions. This program supports ISU 2017-2022 Strategic Plan Goal 1 of “ensuring access to the ISU Experience” by providing an exceptional education that provides “practical, global, and leadership experiences and informed critical thinkers needed to solve 21st century” event management challenges. The proposed program also supports ISU 2017-2022 Strategic Plan Goal 3 “improve the quality of life for all Iowans through services and programs dedicated to economic development” since research has shown that events not only add value to communities through identity, leisure, and a positive place to live and work, but economic benefits such as employment, taxes and increased tourism.

The proposed Masters in EM supports the AESHM department mission and EM program mission of “being leaders in undergraduate and graduate education in the areas of event management and planning” by sharing and applying knowledge to improve people’s lives and meet the needs of families, communities, schools, nonprofit organizations, entrepreneurs, and businesses.

Relationship to existing programs at the institution. The proposed program will provide coursework at the graduate level and will complement the current undergraduate EM degree at ISU. The proposed curriculum requires courses in hospitality management, AESHM, and other programs, such as graduate courses in the Greenlee School of Journalism and Communications and College of Design. While elements of EM skills are similar to hospitality management and business skills (i.e., financial management), the proposed program differs from the current hospitality management master's program since unique skills are required for event managers (e.g., site selection, event design, event risk management and event emergency response, and event project management), and these skills are not deliberated in other graduate curricula.

Relationship to existing programs at other colleges and universities. The University of Iowa offers an undergraduate certificate in event planning that is part of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication. No university in Iowa offers a master's degree in EM.

Unique features. The AESHM department has a long history and culture of producing and executing a wide variety of events, such as the Fashion Show, the Cherry Pie fundraiser (in conjunction with the Joan Bice Underwood Tearoom), and Fine Dining events. The undergraduate program in EM was a natural extension of students participating in these events to formalize an event management program because many AESHM students actively took leadership roles in the planning and executing of department, college and university events.

Current faculty and graduate students in the AESHM programs conduct research in the event, meeting and festival realms such as The Iowa State Fair, mega events, Pride festivals, community-based festivals and EM scholarship of teaching and learning. AESHM faculty are recognized as faculty that lead cutting-edge research and publish in top-tiered EM, hospitality, tourism, business, apparel and design journals and present at leading conferences throughout the world. The increase of faculty with experience, teaching and research capabilities in EM has perpetuated the ISU EM program as a nation-leading program. The AESHM department is also a leader in international EM education experiences, such as the creation of Exploring Hospitality and Event Management in the Arabic World program (United Arab Emirates) and the Experience Prague, Czech Republic the Awesome (AESHM) Way. Because of the combination of hospitality and apparel graduate programs in the same department, AESHM has the experience and the ability to execute this proposed program.

The AESHM department provides interdisciplinary teaching and research opportunities in labs for graduate students and faculty, such as the new EM Learning Lab (THE MEETING ROOM: Where Experiences and Technology Innovate), the Joan Bice Underwood Tearoom, and the Digital Apparel and Textiles Studio. Furthermore, the department will lead efforts for the proposed café and merchandise location at the upcoming Student Innovation Center.

In addition to being one of the first programs of its kind, this program will help shape the discipline by setting the standard for graduate curriculum, and we hope to lead the efforts in creating an accreditation program/commission for EM programs worldwide.

Finally, CHS's focus on human potential will make ISU an excellent university to host an online Event Management master's degree. CHS studies every aspect of people's daily lives, such as why people attend events, how events can be more sustainable, and how events can make a more equitable society.

Resources to establish a high-quality program. The AESHM department currently has 25 graduate faculty members, with three tenure-track faculty members in the EM program. Furthermore, two graduate level courses in EM already exist and will be used for the proposed

program. Current faculty members have the experience to teach graduate EM courses. The new EM Learning Lab, created in Fall 2017, facilitates the delivery of the proposed program by offering space devoted to the program. The AESHM graduate faculty members will be able to assist with teaching of graduate courses. The department has an administrative assistant in the main office that is completely devoted to graduate programs. This position facilitates the admission process for graduate programs, provides guidance for our graduate students, and assists with all graduate deadlines and paperwork.

Student demand. Enrollment in the EM undergraduate program has increased steadily in the past 7 years, peaking at 369 EM majors in 2017. The department receives several inquiries about graduate EM education every month. Additionally, national- and global-demand for event managers is growing, but only a few educational institutions in the world currently offer graduate courses or certifications in event management.

Workforce need/demand. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, demand for event managers is expected to grow 10% in the decade 2014-2024, which is faster than the average of all occupations. Formalized undergraduate EM degrees have only been offered by universities in the past decade. In industry and practice, many professionals “stumble” upon EM responsibilities as part of their overall job responsibilities in areas of marketing, administration, public relations and sales. Typical entry-level education required for meeting, convention and event planners is a bachelor’s degree, and 2017 median pay was \$47,350 per year. Whereas traditional EM programs evolved from hospitality and tourism programs, scholars and researchers suggest EM should be a stand-alone program due to increased global growth of events and specific competencies needed for event managers (e.g., site selection, event design, stakeholder development, event risk management, and virtual meetings).

Cost. ISU uses a decentralized financial management model for the development of its annual operating budgets. The Resource Management Model (RMM) is a responsibility-centered and incentive-driven approach to financial planning and management. Through the RMM, 25% of net tuition revenue is allocated to academic colleges based on a student’s choice of major, and 75% is allocated to academic colleges based on teaching (as measured by student credit hours). Through the infrastructure of ISU’s budget model, then, financial resources follow students and are allocated based on majors and teaching. Tuition revenue will include both base tuition and applicable differential rates. The proposed degree program will be funded through this proven financial model and is expected to be fully self-sustaining over time. In addition to the budget model as described, financial resources may also come from internal reallocations made within the colleges during the startup phase. The level of reallocation will depend, in part, on the numbers of new students attracted to the proposed program, and the number of existing students who choose the proposed program over another program, based on standard and differential tuition rates. The proposed program will not be dependent on grants, contracts, gifts, central university resources or reallocations between academic colleges.

Estimated new variable costs include recruitment and marketing costs, a one-quarter time graduate assistantship to support the Director of Graduate Education for the new program, and possible course development funds made available to faculty. Through the budget model described above, tuition revenue associated with student credit hour production will support any marginal costs. This program will not require investments in fixed expenses such as facility renovations, information technology software, equipment or licenses.

Projected enrollment.

Graduate	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5	Yr 6
Majors	7	10	16	25	32	44

Anticipated sources of students. Students will be recruited from the following four sources:

- (a) current employees in Iowa with a bachelor's degree from an accredited university that have an EM focus in their employment responsibilities, but no formal education in event planning;
- b) members from professional associations in meeting and event planning such as Professional Meeting and Convention Association (PMCA) and Meetings Professional International (MPI) and have a bachelor's degree from an accredited university;
- (c) international students seeking a master's degree in Event Management; and
- (d) alumni of ISU Event Management undergraduate program.

Accreditation. Currently, there is no specific accreditation for EM programs.

Evaluation plan. Program assessment plans will follow guidelines recommended by Levels of Assessment from the Student to the Institution, Association of American Colleges and Universities. Individual course objectives will be assessed by student work from specific courses (e.g., papers, projects, presentations, and portfolios), as indicated by course instructors. Student Evaluation of Teaching results, shared after each semester directly to the instructor, will also provide feedback pertaining to individual courses. Program objectives will be assessed through the number of inquiries about the program, the number of students enrolled, recruitment of students from underserved populations, program dropout rates and program graduation rates. CHS Career Services will also assess the program through graduate career/salary reports.

Date of implementation. August 2019

Letters of Support



COLLEGE OF  
LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES

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Mass Communication

100 Adler Journalism Building, Room E305  
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MEMORANDUM

February 1, 2018

To: Iowa Board of Regents  
From: Heather Spangler, University of Iowa Event Planning Certificate Coordinator  
Re: Iowa State University's proposed Master's of Science in Event Management

Dear members of the board,

I am writing to lend my support for Iowa State University's Department of Apparel, Events, and Hospitality Management's proposed Master in Event Management program.

Event management is a fascinating, growing field and students are hungry to learn more.

I have spoken with Program Director Eric Olson about his plans and am confident that the proposed graduate program will fill a need in our state but will not conflict with what we are offering here at the University of Iowa.

Sincerely,

*Heather Spangler*

Heather Spangler

Office of the Provost and Executive Vice  
President for Academic Affairs



DATE: December 19, 2018

TO: Eric Olson, Program Director, Event Management Program, Iowa State University  
FROM: Patrick Pease, Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, University of Northern Iowa  
RE: M.S. in Event Management

Dear Dr. Olson,

Thank you for sharing your new program plans with University of Northern Iowa. Your proposed master's degree in Event Management is a clear extension and benefit to your existing undergraduate offerings and provides a unique perspective on the field. UNI does not have a similar program. We support the academic development behind your proposal and have no objections to your new offering. We wish you well in developing the program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patrick Pease".

Patrick Pease  
Associate Provost for Academic Affairs



Joan Kranovich, CMP  
Vice President of Education  
Meeting Professionals International  
Heartland Chapter  
jkranovich@visitquadcities.com  
309-736-6831

Eric D. Olson, PhD  
Assistant Professor  
Iowa State University  
olsoned@iastate.edu  
515-294-0699

Dear Mr. Eric Olson,

As Vice President of Education for the local Meeting Professionals International (MPI) Heartland Chapter, I would like to submit our chapter's interest and support in the endeavor to add a Masters in Event Management (EM) to Iowa State University's esteemed offerings.

The Heartland Chapter of MPI is comprised of approximately 100 members currently. Our membership consists of event management professionals, suppliers and vendors of event services, students in hospitality, as well as hotel sales professionals and those individuals representing destinations for meetings and events. Most of our members are from Iowa and Nebraska with a few from Illinois, Kansas, Minnesota, and Missouri.

The Masters in Event Management Degree would be of interest to our members because of our relationship to the events industry. Besides our chapter members being able to further their education and careers, we would be able to invite these students to join the Heartland Chapter of MPI at a significantly discounted price while they're attending classes at Iowa State University.

Overall, Meeting Professionals International is the largest association in the meetings & events industry with 90 chapters in 19 countries. The events industry is a multi-billion-dollar industry that contributes to the economic growth of many countries, states, and cities through tourism, food & beverage, and entertainment.

There is a growing need for educated individuals in both realms of event planners and event suppliers. The Masters in Event Management (EM) Degree at Iowa State University will help fill that need as the events industry continues to transform, evolve, and grow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Joan Kranovich'.

Joan Kranovich, CMP  
Vice President of Education  
MPI Heartland Chapter



January 11, 2018

Board of Regents, State of Iowa  
11260 Aurora Avenue  
Urbandale IA 5033

Dear Board of Regents:

I'm writing with regard to the Master of Science in Event Management at Iowa State University under consideration by the Board.

As a past president of the Heartland Chapter of Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA), and a current Emerging Leaders Committee Chair I would like to offer our chapter's support for the creation of a Masters in Event Management at Iowa State University.

The mission of PCMA is to deliver superior and innovate education and promote the value of professional convention management. Your proposal complements our mission of providing and supporting our chapter's educational programming initiatives.

The PCMA Heartland Chapter serves 175 members from Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and Oklahoma, and our Chapter offers educational and idea exchanges on a regularly basis for our members and other industry professionals. The Chapter hosts an annual Hospitality Career Exploration event to introduce area hospitality students to various jobs in the industry.

The meeting industry is a billion dollar industry that provides economic value to communities and cites. Furthermore, there is a growing need to provide meeting and event managers with up to knowledge to solve complex data-driven problems in an ever-changing international marketplace. We welcome this initiative.

Please feel free to reach out to me directly should you have any questions. I can be reached via email: [Teresa.Hellman@ExperientSelect.com](mailto:Teresa.Hellman@ExperientSelect.com) or 913-642-4581.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Teresa Hellman". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Teresa Hellman, CMP  
PCMA Heartland Chapter Past President 2008  
Emerging Leaders Co-Chair 2016-2018

C: Elizabeth Huston, 2017 Chapter President  
Kerry Kerr, 2018 Chapter President  
Kate Turner, Emerging Leaders Co-Chair 2016-2018