

Contact: Rachel Boon

**REQUEST TO TERMINATE THE INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE MBA PROGRAM (HONG KONG LEARNING CENTER) AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA**

**Action Requested:** Approve the request by the University of Iowa to terminate the International Executive MBA program (Hong Kong Learning Center).

The Council of Provosts and Board office staff reviewed the proposal and recommend approval.

**Background:**

Description of program. The Hong Kong MBA Program is an alternative learning center for the Tippie MBA located in Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong. The program was opened in 2002. Students in the program take the same course requirements as those of the Professional MBA program in Iowa, taking courses on two consecutive weekends each month. A local education partner was utilized to manage student recruitment and class logistics, while the University of Iowa managed the academics, including course scheduling, faculty hiring, etc.

Reason for proposed termination. Demand for the program initially became more challenging as the MBA market grew saturated with other quality U.S.-based MBA programs such as Chicago-Booth, as well as growth within well-respected local universities like the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. Then in 2019, the widespread political unrest, coupled with the emerging coronavirus pandemic, decreased class sizes to enrollment levels that could not sustain a robust academic atmosphere. It was safety concerns, coupled with concerns about the learning environment that led the Tippie College to decide to indefinitely suspend courses and applications in spring 2020. The Elected Faculty Council and a review by the Tippie Global Taskforce have made the recommendation to move the suspension to a permanent closure of the program.

Effect on current students. All students that were actively enrolled in the program in spring 2020 were given completion options through the Tippie Online MBA program and have since graduated with their degrees. Those not actively taking courses or that had previously withdrawn will be offered a plan to graduate should they ask to return to complete their MBA. Students will be accommodated in the Online MBA program and will register and pay tuition and fees as the other students in the program. Returning students will be held to the academic standards and expectations of the Online MBA program, including attending courses synchronously and participating in group work, despite potential time zone differences. Hong Kong MBA students will only be given this option if they still have credits that a valid through the Registrar (within 10 years of course completion). They will have to go through the university's readmission process. A student's graduation requirements will be based on their original degree audit from their admission into the HKMBA, unless upon review, it makes more sense to update their requirements to the newest set of requirements.

Application, Enrollment and Completion Trends:

	<b>Applications</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>	<b>Completions</b>
2020	0	4	10
2019	11	11	14
2018	19	18	28
2017	15	29	13
2016	27	31	31

Impact on resources. The program worked with a local partner for program administration, the Hong Kong Management Association (HKMA), so there was minimal Iowa staff time involved. Faculty teaching in the program taught off-load, so the closure does not have a direct impact on freeing additional faculty resources. However, this will allow for more faculty capacity for other off-load programs like the Italy MBA or overload work elsewhere in the college.

The structure of the program was designed so that the fluctuations in revenue would be absorbed by the local partner, the Hong Kong Management Association (HKMA). Therefore, there are no significant cost savings with the program closing.

Impact on workforce. There will be no impact on the Iowa workforce as this program served students in Hong Kong.

Alternative programs. There are other programs in Hong Kong to serve the student market.

Effective date of termination. Upon approval by the Board of Regents.