

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST TO TERMINATE THE MASTER OF ARTS AND Ph.D. PROGRAMS IN HISTORY
OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY**

Action Requested: Consider recommending approval of the request by Iowa State University to terminate the Master of Arts and the Ph.D. Programs in History of Technology and Science in the Department of History in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Executive Summary: The request to terminate the Programs resulted from reduced funding and inability to maintain the graduate programs. This request was reviewed by the Board Office and the Council of Provosts and is recommended for approval. This request addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priority to pursue “educational excellence and impact” and Goal #8 – “Iowa’s public universities and special schools shall be increasingly efficient and productive.”

Background:

- ◇ **Description of program.** The graduate program in History of Technology and Science examines the role of technology and science in the formation of modern societies and their attitudes toward people and the world. The program is structured in a sequence of courses leading to the Master of Arts and the Ph.D. degrees. These courses approach their subject in the context of social and cultural change; therefore, they are also open to and appropriate for students in engineering, the sciences, science education, and science journalism.
- ◇ **Reason for proposed termination.** The History Department experienced significant budget cuts during the financial crisis of 2008 which affected the department’s ability to maintain its graduate programs. The History of Technology and Science programs experienced reduced faculty due to retirements and resignations. In 2013, the last faculty member in the program retired which left only three faculty members in the History of Technology. Furthermore, there are a number of competing programs in the History of Technology and Science across the country which has made it difficult to recruit the best students.
- ◇ **Five year trend in enrollments.** Due to the budget cuts, the department was unable to offer incoming students financial aid. Therefore, new applications ceased. In 2008-09, there were 13 students; by 2012-2013, there were three students.
- ◇ **Five year trend in graduations.** Since 2008-2009, there have been two graduates from the Master of Arts program and six graduates from the Ph.D. program.
- ◇ **Effect on current students.** As of January 2013, the History Department had three students who wished to complete a degree in the History of Technology and Science program. One student completed the degree during 2013-2014. The two remaining students are in the final stages of writing dissertations and are expected to defend by the end of 2014. Therefore, the proposed program termination will not become effective until all of the students currently enrolled will have graduated.

- ◇ Impact on resources. The proposed termination is expected to have little or no effect on costs because the resources have already been shifted to students in other departmental graduate programs. Faculty have been redirected to other teaching duties. Faculty in the graduate programs will continue or increase their current undergraduate teaching. History of Technology faculty will have an opportunity to continue graduate teaching and advising in the Agricultural History and Rural Studies Program. There are no facilities or equipment specifically designated for the History of Technology and Science programs.
- ◇ Impact on workforce. Minimal impact on the workforce is expected because most of the graduates of the programs have pursued employment outside of the state of Iowa due to limited employment opportunities in the state.
- ◇ Alternative programming. Students interested in the History of Technology will have an opportunity to enroll in the graduate program in the existing Agricultural History and Rural Studies Program. The number of students pursuing History of Science has typically been smaller than the number of students interested in the History of Technology.
- ◇ Effective date of termination. If the proposed program termination is approved by the Board, suspension of admissions to the program will become effective immediately and will be reflected on the department website and University Catalog. Termination of the program will become effective upon completion of the program by the students who are currently enrolled.