

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
THE FACULTY SENATE

PROGRAM REVISION APPROVAL FORM

50 COPIES REQUIRED

PROGRAM TITLE: Certificate of Strategic Communication and Public Information

PLEASE CHECK: GRADUATE UNDERGRADUATE

DEPARTMENT: Journalism/Communication

HEAD/CHAIR: Karen List, Program Director

SCHOOL OR COLLEGE: CSBS

DEAN: Prof. Robert Feldman

Submission Date: 10/1/2009

Proposed Starting Date: 1/15/2009

I. PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT

A. Describe the Proposal.

The Certificate of Strategic Communication and Public Information would be an inter-disciplinary course of study requiring at least 15 credits of online course work. It will draw upon courses offered in both Journalism and Marketing, and may become an area of concentration for students pursuing a degree through University Without Walls. The certificate would be open upon application to all matriculated and non-matriculated students who have at least a high school diploma. It would be self-funded through the Division of Continuing and Professional Education. This is a high-demand area where jobs are available, and will focus on the non-profit and governmental areas.

B. Provide a brief overview of the process for developing the Proposal.

The Journalism Program has known of the need for courses in the Strategic Communication and Public Information for many years, but limited resources have prevented our pursuit of the area. Other universities are quite active, including the School of Journalism at the University of Missouri, where 36% of their majors are in Strategic Communication, which is their largest concentration. The U.S. Dept. of Labor predicts that jobs in this area will grow at about 16 to 20 percent between now and 2016. Using the same successful techniques that have created our award-winning online Certificate of Journalism, we feel we can create a successful new certificate that will enhance campus revenues and attract students who would otherwise never have access to our UMass courses. The proposed curriculum includes several existing courses currently offered online. Proposals for new courses have been submitted, or are currently being submitted, to the Faculty Senate for approval. The certificate will be self-funded through Continuing and Professional Education. There will be no additional burden for on-campus courses. Our instructors are drawn from on-campus instructors and professors and from experienced professionals in the field.

II. PURPOSE AND GOALS

Describe the Proposal's purpose and the particular knowledge and skills to be acquired.

The Certificate will focus on non-profit and governmental Strategic Communication and Public Information, rather than on corporate communication. It will be open upon application to all matriculated and non-matriculated students who have at least a high school diploma. This form of strategic communication has a close relationship with journalism and marketing skills, especially in an online world. The courses selected for the certificate provide instruction in essential skills such as writing, research, and the theory of public opinion, along with case studies. Three required courses and two additional electives, totaling 15 credits, would complete the certificate. A 2.5 G.P.A. must be maintained. Of the courses submitted for certificate completion, only one can carry a grade below a C. The required courses will include Journal 300, Newswriting and Reporting (4 cr.) and Marketing 301, Fundamentals of Marketing (3 cr.). One other course is required, chosen from Journal 295D, Public Relations for Government and Non-Profits (3 cr.) or Journal 395K, Redefining Public Relations (3 cr.). Two more elective courses will be needed. Students can select electives from courses in journalism readings, responding to disasters and natural catastrophes, writing for public relations, harnessing public relations, the journalist's toolkit, journalism in an age of terror, community public relations, and internet marketing. The courses will be revised and more will be added as needed. Availability of classes depends on adequate enrollment, as with all C.P.E. courses, but as we have found with our Certificate of Journalism, there is little competition for professional programs such as ours. Our certificate provides a coherent set of courses targeted toward strategic communication careers in government and non-profit organizations. Students in the military, for instance, might find civilian careers in public relations or promotions as public information officers. Students seeking jobs in the broad world of non-profit organizations, such as the Connecticut River Watershed Council, will find much to help them advance their careers.

Certificate of Strategic Communication and Public Information

Journalism Program
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Prof. Norman Sims, Coordinator

The proposed Certificate of Strategic Communication and Public Information would be an inter-disciplinary course of study requiring at least 15 credits of online course work.

It will draw upon courses offered in both Journalism and Marketing, and may become an area of concentration for students pursuing a degree through University Without Walls.

The certificate would be open upon application to all students who have at least a high school diploma. Matriculated and non-matriculated students would be welcome. Three required courses and two additional electives, totaling 15 credits, would complete the certificate. A 2.5 G.P.A. must be maintained. Of the courses submitted for certificate completion, only one can carry a grade below a C.

The certificate would be self-funded and offered through the Division of Continuing and Professional Education. Course revenues would pay the instructors, with additional revenues benefiting the growth of the Journalism program and the Marketing Department, the campus, and associated colleges. Review of courses, evaluations, revenues, and student satisfaction will be ongoing, with a report generated after five years that details enrollments and completions among other data.

This is a stand-alone certificate primarily for non-matriculated students who are outside our geographical area, but matriculated students are welcome such as those in UWW or other existing majors on campus. If non-matriculated students elect to apply for admission to UMass Amherst and pursue a Journalism degree, the Journalism 300 course would meet one requirement of the degree and the other Journalism courses would be electives toward that degree. The Marketing classes could be counted toward a degree in the School of Management, or toward a minor.

This certificate can contribute to the campus programs that, as Chancellor Robert Holub said, "have fostered strong relationships with external community partners to address many of the social, economic, environmental, educational and cultural needs and issues in our region, the Commonwealth, nationally and internationally." The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has named UMass Amherst as a Community-Engaged University. With our online certificates, we are reaching beyond the walled garden of the physical university to share our instructional capacity with audiences in the rest of the world.

We will make a special effort to enroll active members of the Massachusetts Air and Army National Guard. This is in keeping with the spirit of recent state legislation encouraging members of the Guard to take advantage of new education benefits. Additionally, it is our experience from seven years of teaching the online Certificate of Journalism that members of the military and veterans make superior students. To further make our Certificate a worthwhile experience, we have approached senior military officers and military educators to

help us design a certificate that would include courses to further the professional goals of those enrolling in our program.

The courses applying to our new certificate will be revised and more will be added as needed. Availability of classes depends on adequate enrollment, as with all C.P.E. courses, but as we have found with our award-winning Certificate of Journalism, there is very little competition for professional programs such as ours.

We can easily imagine the DNA of our nationally recognized Certificate of Journalism contributing to the success of a Certificate in Strategic Communication & Public Information. Indeed, the U.S. Department of Labor recently said that employment in the public relations career field is projected to grow faster than average. Opportunities will be best for those who can combine practical courses or internships with a degree in some aspect of communications [2009 Bureau of Labor Statistics].

Our proposed certificate provides a coherent set of courses targeted toward strategic communication careers in government and non-profit organizations. Students in the military, for instance, might find civilian careers in public relations or as public information officers. Students seeking jobs in the broad world of non-profit organizations, such as the Connecticut River Watershed Council, will find much to help them advance their careers.

This form of strategic communication has a close relationship with journalism skills. Marketing, especially in an online world, plays an important role in both public information and strategic communication. The courses selected for the certificate provide instruction in essential skills such as writing, research, and the theory of public opinion, along with case studies.

Certificate of Strategic Communication and Public Information

Three Required courses:

Journal 300 Newswriting and Reporting. 4 cr.

Marketing 301 Fundamentals of Marketing. 3 cr.

Plus one of the following:

Journal 335 Introduction to Public Relations 3 cr.

Journal 395D Public Relations for Government and Non-Profits. 3 cr.

Journal 395K Redefining Public Relations. 3 cr.

Electives:

Journal 225 Readings, and other Readings seminars. 2 cr. and 3 cr.

Journal 295E Responding to Disasters and Natural Catastrophes. 2 cr.

Journal 392L Harnessing Public Opinion. 3 cr.

Journal 392P Writing for Public Relations 3 cr.

Journal 393 The Journalist's Toolkit: A Nuts & Bolts Guide to Online Searching. 3 cr.

Journal 393T Journalism in an Age of Terror. 3 cr.

Journal 395PR Community Public Relations. 3 cr.

Marketing 455 Internet Marketing. 3 cr.

10-6-2009

To: Dean Bob Feldman, CSBS

**From: Norman Sims, Journalism
Karen List, Program Director, Journalism**

Subject: Request for Revenue Enhancement Stimulus of \$33,500

We can help enhance UMass Amherst revenues through the online program in Journalism.

We want to propose for Faculty Senate approval a new public relations online program leading to a Certificate of Strategic Communication and Public Information. It will draw upon Journalism and Marketing online classes and will be conducted through Continuing and Professional Education. Several areas in public relations have been providing more jobs than the journalism arena in the past couple years. This has been an area of unmet need on campus, as well. We feel there is a market for this certificate not only outside the university but also among our current students. The certificate will focus on government and nonprofit sectors.

We would like help in launching this new, self-funded certificate, and in ramping up our existing online Certificate of Journalism.

We propose the following as an application for one-time stimulus funds for revenue generation:

(1) Advertising to help launch the new certificate, and to build new audiences for our existing certificate. \$12,000 for the new certificate and \$6,000 for the existing certificate.

This funding would be spent this year and next for promotion of the certificates with the aim of enrolling new students. With the new certificate, we need to notify potential students in the military, government, and non-profits—especially those whose employers would pay for the courses—about the emerging opportunity. Without advertising, it could take years to build regular enrollment.

Our current online Certificate of Journalism has grown steadily, and since 2005 has generated \$1.5 million in revenues, all of which stayed on campus. With some focused advertising, we can add significantly to our enrollments.

Journalism does not have any funding available for this purpose. Continuing and Professional Education and UMassOnline have, over the years, done a smidgen of advertising, but they don't have money either.

We do not need new faculty positions for this purpose. The certificate programs are self-funded.

(2) Brochures, articles, and visits to military bases. \$2,000 in travel funding and \$1,500 in printing, design and delivery expense.

Color brochures for the two certificates could be placed at a number of facilities, especially in the education offices at military bases.

Dr. Frank Faulkner and Lt. Col. Art Clifford, who are instructors in our certificate programs with military experience, are willing to meet with the senior military officers at Barnes ANG Station, Westover ARB, and Otis ANG Station, and to offer advice to young GIs. If we can establish a presence with the Massachusetts military units, and demonstrate that our courses are reliably offered, we can generate larger enrollments. And we could also start marketing to the national military. (We already have certificate students in the military, including the captain of a Navy frigate.)

For relatively small fees, we could prepare magazine articles for military publications, such as the ones produced for military spouses who also get funding for educational experiences, and for *Military Times*.

Higher education is a key for promotion in the military. Our new certificate is named to fit with the military terminology of strategic communication. Most military personnel receive more than enough educational benefits to complete either certificate without personal expense.

(3) Development money to create new courses. \$8,000.

For online courses, we offer instructors a development fee, usually \$3,000, because they need to learn the Blackboard online web platform and design a new course for online delivery. This consumes more time than most people imagine. Right now we could use development money for two new courses, and partial funding for one or two more.

(4) “Initial offering” salary subsidies for new instructors. \$4,000.

C.P.E. will not allow us to teach courses that have fewer than 10 students enrolled. Yet on the first offering, it’s sometimes beneficial for an instructor to have a small class. It’s also important to demonstrate to military education officers that our courses are reliably offered. Therefore, we ask for subsidies on initial course offering during this year and next, to be used only if enrollments fall below 10 students. In following years, these courses would be self-supporting.

Potential Revenue Enhancement

We conservatively estimate that \$33,500 in stimulus funds will produce an additional \$196,425 in campus revenues the first year. In three years, estimating 15% growth per year, additional campus revenues might reach \$682,086.

The table below shows gross revenues from the Certificate of Journalism through Fall 2009. Since Summer 2005, that certificate program has generated about \$1.5 million in gross revenue, all of which remained on campus. The program had no initial advertising or marketing support. It took more than three years to get to \$1 million in gross revenue, but in the past year it has added another half million to the total.

After the new Certificate of Strategic Communication and Public Information gets underway, we would project similar revenues. Of course, it will ramp up much quicker if we get stimulus money.

Online Certificate of Journalism

Semester or Session	Student Enrollment	Student Credit Hrs	Gross Revenue
Summer 2005	136	423	\$112,095
Fall 2005	47	157	\$41,605
Winter 2006	50	150	\$39,750
Spring 2006	55	177	\$48,680
Summer 2006	138	431	\$123,192
Fall 2006	45	144	\$41,760
Winter 2007	63	174	\$50,460
Spring 2007	52	172	\$49,880
Summer 2007	130	398	\$114,956
Fall 2007	75	243	\$72,355
Winter 2008	70	200	\$58,000
Spring 2008	61	203	\$60,262
Summer 2008	168	533	\$170,592
Fall 2008	84	273	\$85,195
Winter 2009	77	223	\$71,360
Spring 2009	91	291	\$90,932
Summer 2009	164	491	\$159,271
Fall 2009	109	333	\$106,560
Totals:	1,615	5,016	\$1,496,905

Revenue Projections

In Summer 2010, our price per credit hour will rise to \$375 or \$380 from the current \$320 level. In the coming year, we hope to offer at least 10 courses that would apply to the Certificate of Strategic Communication and Public Information. Our average enrollment in online classes runs between 13 and 14 students.

Those numbers project revenues of \$146,250 in the first year of operation for the new certificate. But the \$33,500 in stimulus funding we request also includes some funding to promote our existing Certificate of Journalism. An increase of only 10% in that program would produce about \$50,175 in new revenue for the campus, for a total of \$196,425 in the first year. In addition, two Marketing online offerings would see increased enrollment. In three years, estimating 15% growth per year in the two certificate programs, campus revenues might reach \$682,086.