



THE STATE UNIVERSITY of NEW YORK

MEMORANDUM

Office of the
Chancellor

January 11, 2011

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To: Members of the Board of Trustees

From: Nancy L. Zimpher, Chancellor

Subject: Degree Authorization for the State University of New York College at Buffalo

I recommend that the Board of Trustees adopt the following resolution:

Resolved that the Chancellor be, and hereby is, directed to seek the authorization of the Board of Regents for the State University College at Buffalo to confer the degree of Master of Public Administration.

Background

Approval of this resolution will authorize the State University College (SUC) at Buffalo, to confer the Master of Public Administration (M.P.A.) degree, subject to the approval of the Board of Regents. Degree authorization is necessary as the award represents the College's first use of the M.P.A. degree. Authorization by the Board of Trustees and the Board of Regents will allow for the approval of an advanced program of study in Public Administration and Nonprofit Management.

In response to demand from the community and the evident need for an M.P.A. program in the Buffalo-Niagara region, the SUC at Buffalo's School of Natural and Social Sciences, through its Political Science Department and in cooperation with other departments, proposes to add this M.P.A. degree to its offerings. The M.P.A. program seeks to build on the SUC at Buffalo's leadership in preparing a professional workforce to manage public and nonprofit agencies.

The City of Buffalo has requested development of graduate training in public management or administration and has allocated funds for stipends. The College will utilize existing facilities to deliver the program's curriculum. The academic leadership of the College has planned for the reallocation of

existing campus resources to cover the implementation costs of the program. SUNY's Budget Office has reviewed the proposal and agrees with the College's assessment of resources.

Employment possibilities for graduates of the program are significant both in Western New York and the nation with continued emphasis on trained professionals in government and nonprofit service. Current demand for expertise in national security administration and social service needs related to the economic downturn all provide additional reasons for the requested program.

The M.P.A. curriculum in Public Administration and Nonprofit Management will consist of 36 graduate credit hours, including a core program combining the theory and practice of public administration, public finance, management skills, quantitative and qualitative research methods, and a thorough grounding in American government and politics. The Political Science Department, which will house the proposed program, enjoys significant depth and breadth in public administration at both the undergraduate and graduate levels and in comparative public administration. The program is related to several existing programs including a Master of Arts in Applied Economics, a Master of Science in Multidisciplinary Studies and an Advanced Certificate in Public Administration.

The College anticipates the M.P.A. program will enroll 15 students during Year 1, growing to 50 students by Year 5. It will draw substantially from the Multidisciplinary Studies program's enrolled students whose focus is human services. This program currently has 133 students, 40 of whom are from under-represented groups (30.07%). The M.P.A. program is projected to attract approximately 49% of its enrollment from under-represented groups (based on current patterns of students expressing interest in these areas of study and on student survey information). Public and nonprofit administrators from throughout Western New York, including the City of Buffalo and Erie County, are currently pursuing these programs.

SUC at Buffalo's graduate-prepared students are critically important to ensuring competent delivery of services to New York's citizens. The program fits well with the mission of the College and its commitment to urban development. It also aligns with the SUNY Strategic Plan, especially with the goals to create the Entrepreneurial Century and a Vibrant Community. The new M.P.A. degree will strengthen the institution's mission and reputation as well as support the State University of New York's overall commitment to progress in the public and nonprofit sectors.