

November 3, 2009

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Dear Dr. Queener:

I have reviewed the materials Ms. Young sent me regarding the proposed Master of Science in Criminal Justice and Public Safety at IUPUI. In my review I concentrated mainly on how the curriculum compares to standards in the field as that is the area in which I believe I am most competent to make judgments. Before I get to the curriculum, however, let me quickly note that based on their c.v.'s, the faculty look well prepared to teach the courses that are proposed for the new MS degree. I do not think you have any reason for concern as to their ability to deliver the proposed new degree.

Regarding the curriculum, it appears to me to be very heavily weighted toward management and policy analysis courses as opposed to courses that focus more directly and substantively on the criminal justice system, its various components, and the special issues that currently confront criminal justice practitioners. For example, in the list of criminal justice concentration courses (page 5), I noted that there were no courses devoted specifically to topics such as policing, corrections, rehabilitation, drugs, or offenders. However, it did appear that these and similar topics (e. g., terrorism, violent behavior, etc.) might be addressed in special topics courses. While the relative paucity of more substantively focused courses is not necessarily a bad thing, it will make the curriculum different from what I would regard as standard master's level curricula in criminal justice. It would certainly differ from the masters curriculum here at the University of Cincinnati. The emphasis on management and policy analysis is, of course, understandable, as it builds on the well-known strengths that SPEA has in such areas. Further, it may also be true that what the criminal justice really needs is people who have general management and policy skills as opposed to detailed knowledge about offenders, offenses, and how the system works. The implications of this type of curriculum for student recruitment and retention are not entirely clear to me, but I think it will influence the type of students who are attracted to the program.

In addition to the general comments about the curriculum that I made above, I also wanted to note that the plan to include courses on public safety, crime prevention, and mapping seems to me to be a good move. Having these types of courses will be in tune with the direction that I think the field is moving. Here at UC, we already have such courses and they are growing in

popularity. I would also agree that reducing the number of hours to complete the MS program from 48 to 36 will definitely be more attractive to students and comparable to what other leading programs require.

In regards to the other programs that yours will compete with, the proposal does a good job of identifying your major competitors. I know from personal knowledge that we have had several good students from the Indianapolis area here at UC in the past few years. I assume that they might not have come had there been a comparable program available to them at IUPUI.

Although I have no way of knowing for sure, I would suspect that if the proposed MS program becomes a reality it will be more attractive than ours for local students who are interested in a terminal MS degree. For students who think they might want to go on for the Ph. D. in criminal justice, however, I would think that UC will still have an edge.

Finally, I think the proposal presents reasonable and conservative estimates of the number of potential students that the new program will attract.

I hope you find these comments helpful. Please let me know if you need anything else.