

IUPUI GAC Reviewer Form

Documents Reviewed:

Proposal to create an online MA Degree in Philanthropic Studies

Summary of Proposal: The focus of this proposal is to add an online option to the School of Philanthropy's MA degree.

1. Are the goals clear and achievable?

Yes. The classroom program is in place, and the proposal reflects a reasoned approach to adding the online program based on what's already in place. I am particularly impressed with their reliance on IU's online team, to ensure quality in the program. My only reservation is the start date. The proposal doesn't reflect a target start date. Thirty-six credit hours is a great deal to convert to a quality online program.

2. Is the program academically sound?

Presuming the present MA is academically sound, there is no reason that this online component should not be strong as well.

3. Are faculty resources available to offer this program without undercutting other key missions of the unit?

It appears so. This proposal reflects an expanding School, with seven recent hires and three more anticipated in the coming year, and additional hires slated thereafter. That's quite impressive. Since the same courses will be offered both online and in the classroom, there should be no problem, as long as the present and future faculty are willing to create online components of their courses. My experience is that this isn't always the case, however, which is likely why the proposal refers to receiving additional assistance from other IU faculty as well as adjuncts. Of course, that would then require an additional allocation of resources.

4. Is there overlap, either real or potential, with any other unit that could harm the program or be exploited to help the program?

The proposal points out that SPEA both in Indianapolis and in Bloomington offer MPA degrees with a concentration in nonprofit management. The perspective is different, however, so I don't see any potential conflict or negative overlap. In fact, if the School of Philanthropy is the only online program, there may be opportunities to offer some of their courses to students enrolled in the other programs. Presently Philanthropy students are encouraged to take classes in other programs and the proposal states that they may continue to do so as a way of "meeting several of the electives." While it's not clear, this suggests that those programs, such as SPEA's nonprofit management certificate, are offered online. It would be useful to include that clarification.

Further, this program should not create any adverse overlap with the classroom program. In fact, as stated previously, it will provide an opportunity for those going to class at IUPUI to take some online classes, which may make the School and the program more attractive.

5. My recommendation, comments/concerns regarding this proposal

I recommend that this proposal be approved. I would suggest, however, that the proposal better explain how the necessary faculty mentioned (other IU faculty or adjuncts) does not create an additional allocation of funds. I would also clarify that the other programs the Philanthropy students take at other schools are online courses, if that is the case. And it would help to include a target date for implementation of this program. As mentioned previously, this is a large project, even with the assistance of the technology experts. It's important to have a reasonable expectation of when the online courses can be completed and the expected quality of each course maintained. If, in fact, there are already some online courses in place at the School, I would include that information in this proposal.