PROPOSAL FOR A *[M]*

Consultant Report for New Programs

Logo

Description automatically generated

[PROPOSING CLU(S)]

[PROPOSING SCHOOL(S)]

[PROPOSING DEPARTMENT(S)]

[DATE]

The evolution of academic programs at Rutgers is critical to the university and the needs of students, faculty, and the citizens of the State of New Jersey. The Office of University Academic Affairs supports this through a university-wide *Academic Program Approval Process* ensuring appropriate input, accountability, and decision-making at multiple levels to promote:

* Academic excellence;
* Optimal impact on the Rutgers’ community and broader statewide citizenry;
* Alignment with strategic academic priorities;
* Commitment to educational access, diversity, equity, and inclusion; and
* Effective and strategic use of university resources.

Consultant Report Format

The consultant should submit a written evaluation of the program and include a specific recommendation to the institution.

Please include a cover letter or introductory statement with the following information:

* Consultant name and brief summary of relevant credentials and experience
* A statement verifying no conflict of interest
* Identification of the specific proposed program reviewed at the institution/campus/unit
* Date of submission of the report
* Date of the site visit
* Materials provided by the program sponsors for review
* Campus and program personnel who were consulted
* Recommendation and rationale. Consultant may recommend:
* Approval
* Approval upon minor modification by the institution
* Non-approval unless major modifications are implemented
* Non-approval for stated reasons

The report is to be a thoughtful and thorough assessment of the quality of the program, not merely a detailing of the specifics of the proposed program. The program’s degree designation is also an important factor in this review and should be considered throughout the report.

For example:  A doctoral program may have distinct needs in terms of doctoral advising; scholarship; and funding capabilities for areas such as graduate assistants/teacher assistants, external funding sources, and the University’s commitment to funding the program.

The report must be structured according to the following Report Outline, include all specified sections, and answer the questions posed.

1. Program Elements and Sufficient Academic Quality
2. Objectives
3. Describe whether the objectives and underlying principles of the program are sound and clearly stated.
4. Discuss whether the program is consistent with the programmatic mission and educational goals of the institution and/or the chancellor led unit (CLU).
5. Discuss, where appropriate, if the program objectives are appropriate to the careers, professions, or practices into which graduates are expected to enter.
6. Does the program fit well into the institutional/CLU strategic plans, and has the institution considered any impact the new program might have on existing programs at the institution?
7. Discuss how the proposed degree program will advance the impact and reputation of Rutgers as a leading national university recognized for academic excellence.

1. Educational Program
2. Does the proposal provide evidence of program rigor in the curriculum with information that displays:
3. program outcomes detailing what students will be able to demonstrate at completion of the degree program;
4. planned curriculum with course descriptions; and
5. a plan to provide students access to faculty, instructors, and/or staff?
6. Discuss the distribution and nature of required courses, electives, and research (if appropriate) in terms of meeting the objectives of the program. Compare and contrast the proposed curriculum with recognized programs of quality at peer institutions, if appropriate.
7. Are instructional modes and credit distribution consistent with the objectives of the curriculum? [Please explain.]
8. Does the curriculum represent a suitable approach to professional study in the particular field, if appropriate? [Please explain.]
9. Does the curriculum meet certification and/or accreditation standards, if appropriate? [Please explain.]

1. Students
2. Does the proposal provide evidence that demonstrates a commitment to equity, accessibility, and affordability within the new program, including:
3. a plan to promote enrollment of qualified individuals from historically underrepresented populations;
4. a plan to monitor student progress in the proposed degree program. This plan should include approaches to address unanticipated or unknown barriers to equitable program completion; and
5. a plan to provide student services and accommodations to support equitable program completion outcomes?
6. For programs with admissions requirements (such as graduate programs):
7. are the requirements for admission clearly defined and appropriate to ensure a student body capable of meeting the objectives of the program, without such requirements being artificially strict, rigid, or discriminatory? [Please explain.]
8. If there is research and/or publication required for program admission, are there clear guidelines publicly available to applicants?
9. Discuss whether standards for completion of the program are clearly defined and consistent with the objectives of the program.
10. Discuss whether an appropriate mechanism for transfer of students to enter the program exists and comment upon the suitability of any articulation arrangements between this and other existing programs.
11. If other academic units within the institution are to provide educational services to the program, describe whether their commitment to participate is consistent with offering a program of quality in this field.
12. Comment upon the adequacy of advisement to be provided to students enrolled in the program. When reviewing doctoral programs, discuss how dissertation advisors are selected.
13. Is the learning outcomes plan adequate? The plan should include scaffolding to allow students to build on knowledge as they progress through the curriculum and a variety of assessments and corresponding rubrics for students to demonstrate content mastery and skill acquisition.

1. Continuous Improvement
2. Is there a plan for continuous review and improvement of the new academic program? The plan should include:
3. The primary activities within the program that are to be reviewed, including how the program will adapt for new technology and developments within the field;
4. Regularly scheduled time periods/intervals for review;
5. Metrics for program monitoring and guidance for how the institution will course correct, if needed;
6. A mechanism to evaluate success or failure of the program;
7. A method to regularly assess the programs goals and student learning outcomes; and
8. Input by students, field experts, and external reviewers in program review processes.

1. Demand/Need for the Program
2. Student enrollment and demand
3. Is the enrollment plan realistic?
4. Is there evidence that the proposed program will meet the projected enrollments?
5. Do the results of market surveys indicate a sufficient level of student demand to justify the creation of the proposed program? [Please explain.]

1. Employer and/or Post-Graduate Demand

Do the results of employer or post-graduate demand indicate why it is likely or unlikely that students will be able to secure employment and/or continue advanced study upon graduation?

1. In the case of programs focused upon preparing students for specific careers:
2. Do employment projections provided by the program submitter(s) indicate sufficient job opportunities to justify the creation of the program? [Please explain.]
3. Does the proposal include evidence that the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) number for the program is mapped to a single occupation or set of occupations listed in the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) as set forth in the 2020 CIP-SOC Crosswalk created by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the National Center for Education Statistics?
4. Does the proposal include sufficient evidence of substantial current and future labor market demand for the occupation or occupations that are mapped to the program, as supported by documentation of demand from the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development?
5. If evidence of both items above was not provided, was alternative evidence provided to indicate sufficient job opportunities in the region and the State? [For example, data from academic societies, professional associations, consulting firms, or other organizations that provide employment outlook data.]
6. If evidence was not provided for questions a or b above, was an explanation of why there is insufficient data available to assess the program?
7. For students pursuing higher levels of education upon graduation:

Does the proposal provide sufficient examples of graduate programs (within Rutgers and/or nationally) to which such students would be competitive applicants based on curricular preparation?

1. Does the proposal explain how the proposed degree program will take advantage of existing and/or new external relationships to assist student transition post-graduation?

1. Does the proposal provide a list of similar degree programs with which the proposed degree program will compete for students? If yes, does the proposal sufficiently explain why students will choose the proposed degree program?

1. Projected Resource Needs

Please comment on the plan for the dedication of sufficient resources.

1. Faculty

Is there sufficient evidence of appropriately qualified faculty, instructors, staff instructors and/or administrators?

1. Describe whether program faculty possess the appropriate (terminal) degrees and other academic credentials to provide a program of high quality.
2. Comment on faculty involvement in research, teaching, scholarship, creative activity, and community service, and whether this is appropriate to the discipline and to the proposed program.
3. Discuss if the number of faculty in the program and allocation of individual faculty time is compatible with the goal of offering a program of quality.
4. For doctoral programs:
   * + - 1. Comment on the research areas of the faculty and whether they are appropriate for the proposed degree and whether those areas are aligned with the curriculum.
         2. Comment on the number of graduate faculty and their funding records.
         3. Comment upon the number and experience level of potential doctoral advisors.
         4. Comment on the program’s available funding for students and the sustainability of this student financial support.
5. Staff – Support Personnel

Discuss the adequacy of support personnel to be associated with the program, (e.g., secretaries, administrative assistants, bookkeepers, technicians, as appropriate).

1. Finances
2. Discuss the unit’s commitment to provide resources necessary to guarantee a program of high quality (e.g., faculty, equipment, library support staff for the program, below-the-line support for faculty travel, Ph.D. student support, research).
3. Discuss the possible need for significant additional financial support from the university.
4. If applicable, discuss external funding sources, including exact financial commitments, any guidelines that must be adhered to maintain funding, and the proposed length of time for this external partnership.

1. Physical Facilities
2. Discuss the adequacy of laboratory, special facilities, and equipment intended to support the program and, if appropriate, the research associated with the program, and indicate if this is consistent with offering a program of high quality.
3. Comment upon the adequacy of classroom facilities.
4. Comment upon the accessibility to program facilities by individuals with disabilities.
5. If a program has a clinical component, discuss the adequacy of facilities and the arrangements to support the objectives of the program.

\

1. Library

Discuss the adequacy of library holdings and other library resources available to support the program and indicate if they are consistent with offering a program of high quality.

1. Information Technology

Discuss the adequacy of information technology resources available to support the program and indicate if they are consistent with offering a program of quality.

1. Administration
2. Comment on the administrative structure of the program and indicate if this is sufficiently defined and reasonable.
3. If interinstitutional or intrainstitutional cooperation is involved, describe whether the administrative and budgetary responsibilities for the program are clearly defined and adequate.

1. General Suggestions/Comments

Please use this section to provide additional feedback for the institution that is not related to the four items above.