Memorandum

To:

Judith Lothian, Ph.D.

Chair, Faculty Senate

From:

Karen E. Boroff, Ph.D.

Interim Provost and Executive Vice President

Re:

M.S. in Physics

Date:

March 12, 2018

The Office of the Provost is in receipt of the proposed MS in Physics, which passed by vote of the Faculty Senate on November 3, 2017. The approval by the APC and the Senate was conditioned on commitment of resources towards a tenure-track hire and graduate teaching assistant lines, as identified in the Department's request, prior to any student enrollment in the program.

No matter how comprehensive any initial academic proposal may be, there are always open questions. These include "will the proposed student enrollments actually be achieved?" This is a key question in evaluating whether the program is sustainable. In addition, while the design phase is one aspect of a program proposal, actually implementing the program provides a wealth of insights that bring to bear on a program's merit. These include the degree to which learning outcomes have been achieved, the ability to attract and retain faculty members to teach in the program, the kinds of support that may now be needed to sustain an active research agenda in the relevant field, the ability to earn grants and other forms of support, and how competition may react to what in now offered.

There is no need to repeat the elements of this proposal. I would also add that there is no crystal ball for picking programs that will resonate in the market. Sometimes, faculty determination and a measure of sweat equity can make all the difference between a highly successful program and one that fails. I have no doubt of the commitment of the faculty from the Physics Department, but decisions are driven by data. We asked for a business plan for enrollments, for expenses associated with this new program, a marketing strategy, and some analysis of space for a hire. While we realize there may be some additional expense in starting new programs, ultimately, the enrollment in the MS in Physics should be sufficient to offset these costs. Under shared governance, we all need a degree of clarity and agreement to understand that new initiatives need to contribute to our financial sustainability or to acknowledge that new resources from other areas in the college or University may require realignment to subsidize these ventures when enrollment falls short. To this end, a "sunset clause" for under achievement has to be in place.

As a way to balance the need for innovation with the uncertainty of program outcomes, I support the MS in Physics program, on the following provisional basis.

• The Office of the Provost commits to providing incremental dollars for the department to hire one term faculty member to start August 2018. As the department so decides, and in accordance with the Faculty Guide, this hire can be renewed for additional year(s) depending on the department's review and recommendation to the dean.

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• The attached business plan, devised by the department, will be the guiding document on expenses and enrollment projections. If the enrollments (22 full time students) are not achieved by the end of the third year of the program, (1) students in the program will be "taught out" and (2) the program is automatically terminated. If the program does meet enrollment targets, the faculty can, through the normal EPC, Dean, Faculty Senate, and Provost channels, request to make permanent this program.

		College of Arts and Sciences	and Sciences				
	Proposal	for New Master	Proposal for New Master of Science in Physics	lysics			
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		As of 02/08/18	08/18				
	Start-Up 2017-2018	Year One	Year Two	Year Three	Year Four	Year Five	Cumulative
Revenue:				1010	2007 TOCK	5202-2202	10101
Tuition		179.712	362 370	444 864	564 606	673 970	7 475 46
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	0	182,320	368,238	452,036	573,172	633,600	2,209,366
Grants		50,000	100,000	150,000	200,000	250,000	750,000
Total Revenue	0	232,320	468,238	602,036	773,172	883,600	2,959,366
Expenses:							
Personnel		222.571	268.195	437.473	410 017	110 166	1 706 171
Non-Personnel		74,000	54,500	79,500	55,000	55,000	318,000
Total Expenses	0	296,571	322,695	516,973	465,017	503,165	2,104,421
Gross Contribution	0	(64,251)	145,543	85,063	308,155	380,435	854,945
Estimated Administration Occurs and all and a							
Esumated Administrative Overhead Allocation	0	(81,312)	(163,883)	(210,713)	(270,610)	(309,260)	(1,035,778) a
Net Contribution	0	(145,563)	(18,340)	(125,650)	37,545	71,175	(180,833)
Notes:							
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