

July 6, 2016

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Regents

FROM: David L. Buhler

SUBJECT: Utah Valley University's Preparation for Offering Additional Masters Degrees

Issue

When Utah Valley University (UVU) first attained university status in 2008, it was also approved to offer three master's degrees in Business, Education, and Nursing. UVU now proposes five new master's degrees for consideration. The university's preparation to offer more graduate programs should be considered.

Background

During the years of Utah Valley University's (UVU) transition from community college, to state college, to regional university, UVU has evolved from an exclusively undergraduate institution to one that now offers three graduate degree programs: Master of Nursing, Master of Education, and Master of Business Administration. When first initiated, these three programs were coordinated independently by faculty and staff within their respective schools and colleges, with assistance from administrative entities within the University, as needed. While this organization allowed the programs to develop their own distinctive practices, some efforts for designing effective graduate procedures were duplicated across the programs.

UVU convened a Graduate Task Force to consider an organizational structure to support current and future graduate programs at the university. Specifically, the task force was asked to outline the structure and responsibilities of a graduate office, recommend criteria and a process to approve new graduate programs, and to propose qualifications for graduate faculty. The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) outlines standards for institutions offering graduate programming that provided guidance and the task force recommendations were completed in 2014.

Since that time, UVU has fully implemented processes and structures consistent with NWCCU standards. They have established an Office of Graduate Studies and hired a Director of Graduate Studies. A Graduate Council has been formed and graduate policies that address graduate admissions and continuation, graduate program credit and graduation requirements, and graduate faculty standards have been passed by the UVU Board of Trustees. Details regarding these items can be found at: <http://www.uvu.edu/graduatestudies/>.

During the time that UVU was developing graduate program infrastructure, there was discussion in departments and colleges about possible programs to propose. While over fifteen departments at UVU

have expressed interest in offering master's degrees during the planning years, UVU selected the five presented today to move forward now, based upon the results from a strategic planning process. These five programs represent the highest need areas for graduate study in their service region at the present time.

Commissioner's Recommendation

This is provided as background information for the Regents as they consider proposals for five new Masters Degrees from Utah Valley University.

---

David L. Buhler  
Commissioner of Higher Education

DLB/EJH



UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

March 30, 2016

Elizabeth J. Hitch  
Associate Commissioner for Academic and Student Affairs  
Utah System of Higher Education  
60 South 400 West  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101-1248

Dear Liz,

During the past year, Utah Valley University strengthened graduate policies and processes in preparation for expanding graduate program offerings. We established a university graduate office, appointed a graduate director, elected a graduate council, created and revised graduate policies, and developed a graduate program development process for new graduate programs. We did this to ensure quality in our current and proposed graduate programs, courses, and faculty. This letter summarizes our key processes and policies.

Graduate Studies Office and Director of Graduate Studies

The Graduate Studies Office was established in January 2015. Dr. Jim Bailey was appointed as the Director of Graduate Studies the same month. Dr. Bailey has extensive experience with graduate programs at other universities. He planned a Master of Professional Accountancy program at one university and developed a Master of Business Administration program at another university. As head of a business school, he had oversight of a master's program at a third university. He has served on graduate councils at two different universities.

In addition to the appointment of Dr. Bailey, the university hired an administrative assistant for the Graduate Studies Office, and established a budget for the office. The office provides guidance and support for current and proposed graduate programs.

Dr. Bailey led the development of a new graduate policy, revisions of two existing graduate policies, defined a proposed graduate program development process, established a graduate council, and provided feedback and assistance for the development of five proposed master degree programs.

Policies

Utah Valley University has an extensive process for developing, amending, and approving policies. The following four campus entities review and provide comments on new and

amended policies: Faculty Senate, Student Senate, Professional Association of Campus Employees (PACE), and the Academic Affairs Council, which consists of the academic vice-president, academic associate and assistant vice-presidents, and academic deans. The Graduate Council also reviewed and commented on the following policies.

#### Policy 655-Graduate Faculty

Policy 655-Graduate Faculty is a new policy establishing the criteria for faculty teaching in graduate programs. The policy requires tenured and tenure-track faculty to have terminal degrees or to be actively working towards a terminal degree to teach in master and graduate certificate programs. The policy also addresses the scholarship, teaching, and service criteria for graduate faculty. In order to teach in graduate programs, graduate faculty must be approved by their department chair, their dean, and the university Graduate Council.

Policy 655 establishes and outlines the responsibilities of the Graduate Council, which includes approving new graduate programs and courses as well as changes to graduate programs and courses. The Graduate Council also reviews graduate programs as part of the Utah Valley University's program review process. The Graduate Council consists of one graduate faculty member from each college/school elected by their full-time faculty, one graduate student appointed by the Utah Valley Student Body Association, and the Director of Graduate Studies.

The Utah Valley University (UVU) Board of Trustees approved a temporary emergency policy in July 2015, so the Graduate Council could be formed and begin functioning in September 2015. The UVU Board of Trustees approved the regular policy on February 11, 2016. Policy 655 is located at

<http://www.uvu.edu/graduatestudies/preparation/policies.html>

#### Policy 524-Graduate Program Credit and Graduation Requirements

Policy 524 is an amended policy defining the graduation criteria and major processes for masters and graduate certificate programs. This policy defines requirements for enrollment in graduate level courses, credit hour requirements for graduation with master's degrees or graduate certificates, graduate credit for experiential learning, and transfer credit for graduate programs.

The UVU Board of Trustees approved the amended policy on February 11, 2016. Policy 524 is located at <http://www.uvu.edu/graduatestudies/preparation/policies.html>

#### Policy 510-Graduate Admissions and Continuation

Policy 510 defines university graduate program admissions criteria.

This policy requires students to have bachelors' degree in order to be admitted into graduate programs. It establishes a 3.0 minimum grade point average for admission into any graduate program. It defines language requirements for non-native English speakers

for university graduate admissions. It describes appeal processes for applicants denied admissions to graduate programs. It also describes probation, suspension, and readmission processes for students who fail to maintain minimum grade point average or fail to adhere to other university standards.

The UVU Board of Trustees approved the amended policy on March 30, 2016. Policy 510 is located at <http://www.uvu.edu/graduatestudies/preparation/policies.html>

#### Proposed Graduate Program Development Process Guidelines

These guidelines outline the process for the development, approval, and implementation of graduate programs. The guidelines are located at <http://www.uvu.edu/graduatestudies/graduatedevelopmentprocesspage.html>

Before developing a R401, proposed program applicants must show labor market demand and student demand for the proposed program within the UVU service area. The Academic Affairs Council approves programs for further development, whereupon the program faculty begin development of the R401, as well as program and courses in the curriculum management system.

When proposed program faculty complete the R401 as well as the program and courses in the curriculum development system, the sponsoring department's faculty, college/school curriculum committee, and dean approve the graduate program and courses. The Graduate Council reviews the R401 as well as the program and courses in the course management program. The Graduate Council evaluates whether or not the program meets graduate level continuation and graduation requirements. The Graduate Council also reviews the course numbering, course descriptions, course learning outcomes, and course key assignments for graduate level appropriateness and rigor. The Graduate Council evaluates the proposed program assessment and student learning outcomes for the proposed graduate programs. The Graduate Council also evaluates faculty credentials for those faculty who will be teaching graduate courses.

After the Graduate Council approves the R401, program, courses, assessment plan, and graduate faculty, the University Curriculum Committee reviews and approves the graduate program and courses. The Academic Affairs Council then reviews and approves the R401. The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs recommends the graduate program to the President who recommends the program to the Board of Trustees.

#### Graduate Program Proposals

When we first began discussing possible graduate programs, the academic deans named over 20 different possible graduate programs. By requiring the feasibility evaluation, faculty developed 12 feasibility templates that the Academic Affairs Council considered. Out of these 12 feasibility templates, the Academic Affairs Council approved the development of the following five master's programs:

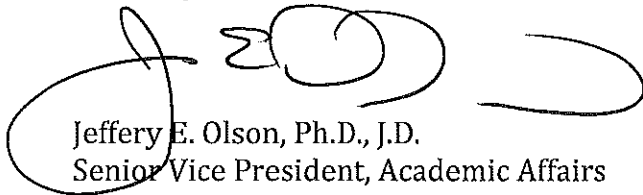
- Master of Accountancy
- Master of Computer Science
- Master of Public Service
- Master of Science in Cybersecurity
- Master of Social Work

After approval by the Graduate Council, the University Curriculum Committee, and the Academic Affairs Council, the UVU Board of Trustees approved these five master degree programs at their March 30, 2016 meeting. These programs meet all the requirements of UVU's graduate policies and processes. The programs are academically rigorous and will be taught by qualified graduate faculty. They have both labor market and student demand for the programs in the UVU service area.

#### Potential Graduate Programs

Based on labor market demand data and supply data where available, the Academic Affairs Council identified the future masters' programs in Appendix A for the development of feasibility studies, which may or may not result in master degree proposals. We will also be developing emphases in current and proposed masters' degrees to meet the needs of our service area.

Sincerely,



Jeffery E. Olson, Ph.D., J.D.  
Senior Vice President, Academic Affairs

JEO/jab

## **Appendix A**

### **Utah Valley University Potential Future Master Degree Programs Developed During The Next Three Years March 30, 2016**

MS in Mathematics (or emphasis in Mathematics Education in Master of Education program)

MS in Computer Engineering

MS in Web Design and Development

MFA in Animation Technical Direction

MS in Technology Management

Master of Personal Financial Planning

Master of Digital Marketing and Analytics