

**BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION**

NO.: AAC 09-02

BOARD DATE: October 2, 2008

**APPLICATION OF LASELL COLLEGE TO AWARD THE MASTER OF
COMMUNICATION**

MOVED: The Board hereby approves the application of Lasell College to award the Master of Science in Communication.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 69, Section 30 et seq.

Contact: Dr. Francesca Purcell, Associate Commissioner for Academic Policy

INTENT

Lasell College, a New England Association of Schools and Colleges accredited independent institution located in Newton, Massachusetts, has filed Articles of Amendment requesting authorization to offer a new Master of Science in Communication. The mission of the proposed Lasell College Master of Science in Communication is to provide a broad-based education that emphasizes both critical thinking regarding issues in public relations and integrated marketing communication as well as the acquisition of a core body of knowledge regarding the discipline.

The intent of the degree program is to prepare professionals in the areas of public relations and integrated marketing and to connect students' knowledge of community theory to practical applications in the profession. Students will have the choice of two concentrations in either public relations or integrated marketing communication and will learn to assist organizations in building brand value through various ways of communicating with target audiences, including advertising, sales promotion, publicity, direct marketing, event sponsorship, and the Internet.

Utilizing job growth projections of the U.S. Department of Labor, it is anticipated that the demand for public relations specialists and professionals trained in integrated marketing techniques will grow 18 to 24 percent between 2004 and 2014. There will be an increased demand for corporate communication specialists between 9 and 18 percent during this same time frame.¹ Lasell graduates will be eligible for employment in public relations, business, government, schools, hospitals, advocacy groups and social services.

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Lasell College was founded in 1851 by Edward Lasell, a graduate of Williams College, who became a professor of chemistry at his alma mater. While on leave, teaching at Mount Holyoke Seminary, Professor Lasell was impressed with the quality of scholarship exhibited by women. Within a year he established the Auburndale Female Seminary. Edward Lasell died of typhoid fever in the school's very first semester, and it was renamed Lasell Female Seminary in his honor. Adoption of the name Lasell Junior College came in 1932, and the College began issuing associate degrees, instead of diplomas, in 1943. In 1989, the College amended its name to Lasell College and its charter to include both associate and bachelor degrees. In 1989, the College added baccalaureate programs in the fields of early/elementary childhood education, fashion/retail merchandising, and hotel travel/ tourism administration. In 1991, the College added three additional baccalaureate programs in business administration, human services, and interdisciplinary studies. In 1996, Lasell College was given approval to grant the Bachelor of Science in Exercise Physiology, and in 1997, the Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Bachelor of Arts in Sociology were approved. In January 1998, the College amended its charter to include in its mission the education of both men and women. The College received approval to begin awarding the Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice and the Bachelor of Science in Legal Studies in 1999, the Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, the Bachelor of Science in Management Information Systems, and the Bachelor of Science in Sports Management in September 2000, and the Master of Science in Management in 2002.

¹ Employment and Output by Industry, 1994, 2004, and projected 2014. Retrieved online, June 4, 2007, at <http://www.bls.gov/emp/empinddetail.pdf>

ACADEMIC AND RELATED MATTERS

Admission Requirements

The primary target audience for the new degree will be working professionals, who either see the need for a master's degree to advance within their organization or who are seeking to change organizations or professions. A similar student demographic is currently enrolled in the College's Master of Science Degree in Management. The College also anticipates a secondary audience, recent graduates of baccalaureate programs.

The admission procedures and entrance requirements for the Lasell College graduate program include the following:

- Official transcripts of all college-level course and a B (3.0) undergraduate average
- Two letters of recommendation from either academic or professional source.
- A written statement of self evaluation and personal goals
- International students must submit a minimum TOFEL score of 550 (paper-based)

Projected Enrollments

The College is anticipating a first-year enrollment of ten part-time students. Based on the College's experience with its Master of Science in Management, the College anticipates a modest enrollment growth in the initial years and that the majority of students will be part time.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Number of Students	10	25	35	40
Student FTE	5	12.5	17.5	20

Current Tuition and Fee Charges

The following fees apply to fall 2007, winter sessions 2008, spring 2008 and summer sessions 2008.

Fee Description	Cost
Tuition	\$475 per credit hour
Comprehensive Fee	\$50 per semester/session
Late Registration Fee	\$50
Replacement ID Card	\$35

Curriculum (Attachment A)

The proposed M.S. Degree in Communication consists of 36 credits, of which 6 may be waived based on prior coursework. Seven foundation courses, three concentration courses and two electives are required. A typical part-time student is expected to finish the proposed degree in two years.

RESOURCES

Faculty and Staff

The College currently has three full-time Communication professors. With the implementation of the M.S. in Communication, these faculty members will each teach at least one graduate course a semester and have the option of teaching up to two courses during the summer. In addition, two full-time faculty members in the Social Sciences Department will each teach one graduate course a semester, and three to four full-time faculty members in the Management and Marketing Department will each teach one graduate course a semester and have the option of teaching up to two courses during the summer. The College is committed to launching a search for two additional full-time faculty in Communication for AY2009/2010, one in public relations and one in integrated marketing communication.

Library and Information Technologies

Lasell College's Jessie S. Brennan Library contains more than 56,500 volumes and approximately 40 electronic databases with 32,492 full-text journals. In addition to its holdings, the Library maintains computers linked to the College's network and to the Internet. Off-campus access is also available. The Brennan Library is a member of the Minuteman Library Network, a consortium of 41 local libraries and is also a part of the Massachusetts Virtual Catalog Project, enabling Lasell College students to search 20 Massachusetts online library catalogs (either on or off campus). The College's RoseMary B. Fuss Technology for Learning Center supports technology applications in the classroom.

Facilities

Classes will be conducted in technology-enhanced classrooms of the Winslow Academic Center and the newly renovated Rosen Auditorium. The technology-enhanced classrooms integrate computer, multimedia and network technology

Fiscal (Attachment B)

The College has detailed enrollment projection income and dedicated program expenses for the first four years of the program.

EVALUATION

The proposed program was reviewed from June 8-10, 2008, by a Visiting Committee comprising of faculty members, Jarice Hanson, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Communication, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Susan Dobscha, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Marketing, Bentley College, Dale Herbeck, Ph.D., Professor, Communication Department, Boston College, and Alex Wang, Ph.D., Associate Professor, University of Connecticut, Department of Communication Sciences. The Visiting Committee expressed overall support for the program, with specific suggestions for improvement, such as comprehensive multi-year planning of multiple enrollments scenarios, a strategic faculty hiring and course delivery plan, changes to curriculum to assure graduate-level education and further fiscal planning for full-time and part-time faculty costs. The College responded to all suggestions. For example, the College has engaged in additional formal planning initiatives, involving faculty hiring, course delivery and multi-year fiscal planning, and has altered course requirements, including offering a thesis and comprehensive exam option. The Visiting Committee expressed that the College's response was detailed and thorough.

PUBLIC HEARING

The required public hearing was held on September 24, 2008, at the Department of Higher Education, located at One Ashburton Place in Boston, Massachusetts. No comment was offered in opposition to the proposed program.

STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION

The staff has thoroughly evaluated all materials submitted by Lasell College and finds that the proposal meets the requirements for NEASC-accredited institutions outlined in 610 CMR 2.08. Recommendation is for approval of the College's petition to offer the Master of Science in Communication.

ATTACHMENT A: CURRICULUM

Major Required (Core) Courses (Total # of courses required = 0)		
Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
	Foundation Courses	21
COM 701	Communication, Ethics & Society	3
COM 702	Organizational Communication	3
COM 703	Communication Research	3
COM 705	Media Relations	3
COM 721	Persuasion and Public Opinion	3
COM 709	Strategies for Negotiation & Conflict Resolution	3
COM 799	Capstone	3
	Public Relations Concentration Required Courses	9
COM 720	Principles of Public Relations	3
COM 713	Writing for Public Relations	3
COM 722	Crisis Communication	3
	Integrated Marketing Concentration Required Courses	9
COM 740/MGMT 740	Consumer Behavior	3
COM 744	Integrated Marketing Communication	3
COM 725	Advertising	3
	Sub-Total # Core Credits Required	30
<i>Elective Course Choices (Total courses required = 2) (attach list of choices if needed)</i>		
COM 730	Graphic Design for the Marketplace	3
COM 731	Video Production	3
COM 740/MGMT 740	Consumer Behavior	3
COM 750	Intercultural Communication	3
COM 751	Health Communication	3
COM 752	Community Relations	3
COM 753	Public Relations in Non-Profit Settings	3
COM 754	Political Communication	3
COM 755	Communication Law	3
	Sub-Total # Elective Credits Required	6
<i>Curriculum Summary</i>		
Total number of courses required for the degree		12
Total credit hours required for degree		36
Prerequisite, Concentration, Dissertation or Other Requirements:		

ATTACHMENT B: FISCAL**Master of Science (Communication) Enrollment Income Projection**

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4*
Number of Students	10	25	35	40
Student FTE	5	12.5	17.5	20
Tuition Income	\$88,500	\$221,250	\$309,750	\$354,000

Master of Science (Communication) Dedicated Program Expense Projection

Budget Item	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Student Stipends	\$3,000	\$6,000	\$9,000	\$12,000
Faculty Wages	\$97,000	\$101,850	\$106,942	\$112,289
Supplies-Office	\$1,500	\$1,575	\$1,650	\$1,700
Supplies Instructional	\$1,000	\$1,050	\$1,100	\$1,200
Small/Leased Equipment Office	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$500
Professional Travel	\$4,000	\$4,200	\$4,500	\$4,700
Meals/Entertainment	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,100	\$2,200
Lecture Series/Speakers	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Professional Membership Dues	\$500	\$600	\$700	\$800
Printing General	\$1,500	\$1,575	\$1,650	\$1,700
TOTAL	\$112,000	\$120,350	\$129,142	\$138,089