

The College of Communication Arts and Sciences is requesting that a moratorium, in conjunction with the proposed degree program disbandment, be placed on the BS degree program in Retailing effective in Spring Semester 2010.

### **Rationale**

The bachelor's degree in the retailing program is being considered for disbandment, and as such, a moratorium should be placed on the program. Disbandment is being considered as part of the budget reduction process in CAS for the following reasons: 1. The Retailing program is a weak fit with the core vision and long-term strategic goals of the College of Communication Arts and Sciences. 2. Enrollment in the undergraduate degree program has decreased almost 40% in 5 years. 3. Faculty has not demonstrated significant success in pursuing and obtaining grant support despite consistent directions over the past five years to obtain external research support.

### **Adequate and accessible dissemination of information to all concerned parties**

It was confirmed in a private Dean's Council meeting on Wednesday, October 28, 2009 that the BS degree program in Retailing was being proposed for disbandment. Late afternoon on Thursday, October 29, Dean Whitten sent an email message to Retailing faculty members informing them that the BS degree program in Retailing, along with the MS and PhD programs, were being proposed for disbandment. Dean Whitten then met with the Retailing faculty the following morning, October 30. Similar correspondences to college faculty, staff, and students in Retailing, as well as alumni, were sent on October 29 and 30.

### **Appropriate consultation/notification of interested parties**

In an effort to develop and apply metrics to the evaluation of programs within CAS, Dean Whitten, Associate Deans, all department chairs and directors, and the college budget officer met multiple times during August, September and October 2009 to discuss program quality and productivity for every transcriptable academic program in CAS. Dean Whitten also held special departmental meetings with faculty to discuss the budgetary situation and appropriate metrics for evaluating programs. Additionally, Dean Whitten and Associate Deans met with the College Advisory Council on September 3 and again on November 6 to discuss the situation. A schedule of the meetings is attached.

Once the proposed program disbandment was announced by the Provost, Dean Whitten and other members of the dean's office met with the Retailing faculty on October 30 (4 of the 5 faculty members were present). On November 5, Dean Whitten, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies Janet Lillie, and Director of Student Affairs and Advising Ann Hoffman met with the Retailing undergraduate students. Seven students attended, along with one Retailing faculty member. In addition, Dean Whitten and administrative staff met with the faculties from all departments in CAS (including Retailing again) during the week of November 2

through 6.

### **Appropriate consultation/notification of college governance.**

In addition to the September 3<sup>rd</sup> College Advisory Council meeting, Dean Whitten and administrative staff consulted with the CAS College Advisory Council on the morning of November 6.

### **Appropriate consultation/notification of external stakeholders (e.g., alumni).**

Dean Whitten and Advancement Director Cara Boeff consulted via phone about the suggested proposal with available CAS Alumni Board members. Additionally, Dean Whitten and Cara Boeff made a number of phone calls to key donors regarding the proposed disbandment.

### **Summary feedback from constituents**

Not surprisingly, the collective Retailing faculty members were upset at the prospect of the program being disbanded. However, faculty members have offered to help with the process of graduating current students in the program. Of the seven undergraduate students who attended the meeting, four were freshman who were relieved to hear they would have an opportunity to complete their degree. The other three were juniors and seniors who were disappointed by the proposal and either had questions about where to pursue graduate education or had questions about impact on their employability. At the end of the meeting all students expressed that their questions had been answered.

### **Timetable for implementation.**

Academic advisors are preparing individual advising plans to be placed in the Electronic Academic Folder System (ESAF) for every student who has declared or made a preference for Retailing as their undergraduate major. Once the moratorium has been approved, all Retailing undergraduates will receive an email stating that their individual advising plan is in ESAF and they will be encouraged to make an advising appointment to review their individual plan. All currently enrolled students will be given an opportunity to complete their Retailing degree. Based on current enrollment numbers, we are planning on offering courses through Summer of 2012, with the proposed closing of the program to be effective for Fall 2012.

The impact beyond undergraduates in the Retailing is minimal. The Food Industry Management undergraduate degree program requires one retailing course (RET 460, Retailing Information Systems). Additional retailing course work is listed as part of a series of suggested electives from multiple units. Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies, Janet Lillie, will speak with Associate

Dean, Eunice Foster, in the Agriculture and Natural Resources about the potential impact.

**Accommodations for students in the program and those who may be applying to the program**

Once the moratorium is in place, we will work closely with the Office of Admissions to notify students who have a major preference for the Retailing undergraduate degree and who were planning on attending MSU in Fall 2010. There are a number of degree program options that would be appropriate for these students including Advertising, Communication, and Marketing as well as the Sales Communication Specialization.