April 24, 2019

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: John A. Elliott
Interim Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

RE: Modification of the Master of Arts in Research Methods, Measurement and Evaluation (RMME)

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Trustees approve the modification to the mode of instruction and course requirements of the Master of Arts in Research Methods, Measurement and Evaluation in the Neag School of Education.

BACKGROUND:

The Master of Arts in Research Methods, Measurement and Evaluation is for current and future practitioners who wish to acquire foundational skills and knowledge in the areas of research methods, measurement, and evaluation. In addition to the existing face-to-face option, adding a completely online option for the Master of Arts will expand the pool of potential students to include non-traditional students, including those who work full time, and students who cannot easily commute to the Storrs campus. The online option will attract professionals from education, non-profits, government, consulting and beyond.

Additionally, the program will decrease the number of required courses and increase the number of electives for both the face-to-face and online programs. This change will make it easier for students to complete the program in a timely manner, without requiring instructors to teach classes that are under-enrolled and will allow students to better design a program of study that matches their particular educational needs.
MASTER OF RESEARCH METHODS, MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION
PROGRAM CHANGE PROPOSAL

Institution: University of Connecticut

Item: Modification to the Master of Arts (M.A.) Program in Research Methods, Measurement and Evaluation within the Department of Educational Psychology in the Neag School of Education

Background

Recent years have seen an increased interest in evidence-based policymaking and rigorous quantitative evaluations of government programs. For instance, the Foundations for Evidence Policymaking Act was enacted in February 2019 with broad bipartisan support. At the same time, more and more universities are moving course offerings online, and creating wholly online degree programs. Online degree programs are able to bring UConn degree offerings to a new audience of part-time students who are also working full time.

The Research Methods, Measurement and Evaluation (RMME) program within the Department of Educational Psychology in the Neag School of Education is positioned to capitalize on the need for well-trained methodologists, measurement professionals and evaluators. In order to fully capitalize on its positioning, the RMME program needs a fully online master’s degree option.

Proposal

Therefore, the Neag School of Education proposes to modify the existing Master of Arts in Research Methods, Measurement and Evaluation as follows:

1. In addition to the existing face-to-face option, a completely online option for the M.A. degree will be added. The necessary online courses have all been developed, or are currently being developed, in collaboration with e-campus. The online program will have the same requirements as the face-to-face program.

2. We have decreased the number of required classes and increased the number of electives, both for the face-to-face and online M.A. degrees.

Specifically, the existing curriculum required the classes EPSY 5510, EPSY 5601, EPSY 5602, EPSY 5605, EPSY 5607, EPSY 6601 and EPSY 6621, plus an additional 9 credits of thesis research (Plan A-thesis) or an additional 9 credits of electives (Plan B-exam). The proposed curriculum makes EPSY 5510 an elective, leave 3 credits available for electives (Plan A) or 12 credits available for electives (Plan B).
**Justification**

Adding a completely online degree option will expand the pool of potential M.A. students in the program to non-traditional students (including those who work full-time) and those who cannot easily commute to the Storrs campus. We expect to attract professionals from education, non-profits, government, consulting and beyond.

Increasing the percentage of the required credits that may be electives will make it easier for students to finish the program in a timely manner, without requiring instructional staff to teach classes that may be under-enrolled. It will also allow a student to better design a program of study that matches his or her particular educational needs.