

## M E M O R A N D U M

To: Daniel Ornt, Dean, CHST  
From: Jeremy Haefner, Provost and Senior Vice President  
Subject: Clinical Psychology Ph.D. Concept Paper  
Date: May 1, 2016  
Cc: William Destler, Chris Licata

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Dean Ornt:

On behalf of President Destler and myself, I thank you and your faculty for the work you all do for the university, particularly as it pertains to the development of new academic programs. We know how much time and effort goes into writing an academic program concept paper and even more goes into the construction of an academic program. We also know that approving an academic program is an extremely serious commitment that the campus undertakes and so making sure that our review and decision-making process is as stringent as possible is a priority for me.

So thank you for submitting the concept paper for a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology.

By way of context, it is important to understand the recent activity with regards to new programs here at RIT. An analysis of the new program activity found on the Academic Affairs Academic Program Management website

(<http://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/academicprogrammngmnt/>) indicate the following:

- Since 2012 (when the conversion moratorium was lifted), there have been 52 concept papers for certificate, bachelor, masters, or doctoral degree programs;
- Of those 52 concept papers, 11 (including yours) were submitted for approval this spring;
- Of the remaining 41 papers, 39 received an approval for further development;
- Of the 39, 20 have emerged as full proposals that are currently under consideration by NYSED for approval;
- Of the 20, 16 have been approved, are now operational, and all have appropriate resource demands; and
- Of the 16 operational, less than 40% are meeting their enrollment targets.

In addition, there was a full proposal approved by the Academic Senate this year and is part of the spring approval process. And I anticipate at least one additional full proposal before the end of the year.

I am sure you will agree that RIT is creative, ambitious and agile when considering new programs.

Adding to the context is the exciting new RIT Strategic Plan “Greatness through Difference” which articulates a number of bold goals and objectives that will place RIT in the forefront of higher education. While many goals could and will shape and impact the future programs we add to the portfolio, there are some that stand out. First, there are several goals that will push the university to becoming first among private universities for the production of STEM graduates. We wish to be first among private universities for graduating the most number of women STEM graduates, AALANA male STEM graduates, and Deaf and Hard-of-hearing STEM graduates. Second, we wish to increase graduate student enrollments by 30% in a fiscally prudent manner. Finally, we wish to materially increase our student-centered research footprint. All of these aspirations require considerable resources and strategic decisions.

It is in this context that I met with the President, SVP Jim Watters and SVP Jim Miller to review program proposals.

With regards to your concept paper for a Clinical Psychology Ph.D. program, we approve this concept to move forward with certain clear caveats. We agree that this doctoral program is a good fit for our research, graduate education, and STEM goals emanating from the strategic plan. However, neither the program nor the campus is ready to launch such a program and so we advise this process to slow down and build both campus-wide enthusiasm as well as research-ready faculty in this area. Specifically,

- While we were encouraged to see greater collaboration between CHST and the COLA psychology faculty, we must be assured that collaboration is real and deeply engages the faculties from both colleges;
- The issue of the Psychology doctorate in School Psychology must be rectified with this Clinical Psychology Ph.D.; in particular, the campus will not support both programs;
- We are concerned with the regional competition for such a program – for example, Roberts Wesleyan College is currently seeking NYSED approval for a similar program; the full program proposal must be convincing in that it will be differentiated from other programs;
- The new additional faculty expense of 3 tenure-track lines will make this program the most expensive Ph.D. program we will consider – we recommend reducing these costs;
- The number of research-ready faculty who can support Ph.D. students is currently insufficient to launch a doctoral program – this must increase before we consider a full proposal; and
- The campus is currently budgeting additional Ph.D. programs at a rate of approximately one every 3-4 years – since the Ph.D. in mathematical modeling

will begin in fall of 2017, the earliest the campus will resource a new Ph.D. program will be in the fall of 2020.

As a result, we approve the Clinical Psychology Ph.D. concept to move forward but that any full proposal must have the earliest start date of fall 2020 and have demonstrated an existing capacity of faculty to support students whichever comes later.

Moving forward, we continue to encourage faculty to be creative and innovative with new academic program concepts. As general guidance, we suggest

- Undergraduate and graduate degree programs that have a minimum intake of 15 1<sup>st</sup> year students (not including transfers);
- Graduate degree programs that offer a non-thesis option so as to appeal to the student wanting to upgrade their skill set;
- A focus on degree programs that will materially allow the campus to reach its goals of being a leader in STEM degrees;
- Degree programs, particularly graduate degrees, that offer degree completion through a set of stackable certificates;
- Degree programs that can be offered online or in a competency-based format so as to reduce costs, particularly capital expenses; and
- A freedom to pursue innovative approaches to both content and delivery methods such as the micro masters degrees.

On behalf of all of us at RIT, thank you for submitting this concept paper.

Sincerely,



Jeremy Haefner  
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs