

TOPIC: RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN TECHNOLOGY, ARTS AND MEDIA AT UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER

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I. SUMMARY

This item recommends approval for University of Colorado Boulder (UCB) to offer a Bachelor of Science in Technology, Arts and Media, including waivers from gtPathways requirements and the 120 credit cap.

II. BACKGROUND

COMMISSION AUTHORITY

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education's role and responsibility in the review and approval of new academic programs at institutions operating under a performance contract is defined in §23-5-129(6)(b), which states that new and modified program proposals shall be reviewed and approved only on the basis of fit with the institution's statutory role and mission.

III. STAFF ANALYSIS

OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED PROGRAM

The proposed program builds on, and is a natural extension of, the ATLAS Institute's undergraduate minor and certificate programs in Technology, Arts and Media that have been offered since 1998. Graduates will receive a multi-disciplinary, technically rigorous education resulting in broad-based skills in a wide range of computing and engineering topics, extensive creative software and project-based learning, and expertise in new media. The BS TAM program, housed in the College of Engineering and Applied Science, will draw on coursework and instructors in other Colleges and Schools at CU-Boulder, notably the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Music.

ROLE AND MISSION SUPPORT

This degree supports UCB's statutory role and mission, which states:

(a) The Boulder campus of the university of Colorado shall be a comprehensive graduate research university with selective admission standards. The Boulder campus of the university of Colorado shall offer a comprehensive array of undergraduate, master's, and doctoral degree programs. The Boulder campus of the university of Colorado has exclusive authority to offer graduate programs in law. The Colorado commission on higher education, in consultation with the board of regents, shall designate those graduate level programs that are the primary responsibility of the Boulder campus of the university of Colorado. The university has the responsibility to provide on a statewide basis, utilizing when possible and appropriate the faculty and facilities of other educational institutions, those graduate level programs. The commission shall include in its funding recommendations a level of general fund support for these programs. [§23-20-101(1), C.R.S.]

Pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes 23-5-129(6)(b), department staff finds that UCB's proposed Bachelor of Science in Technology, Arts and Media degree is consistent with the institution's statutory role and mission. CU's Board of Regents approved the program at its November 19, 2014 meeting.

Staff recommends this degree be exempt from gtPathways requirements because it is not a Liberal Arts & Sciences degree and so has different general education requirements, not supported by gtPathways. Also, staff recommends a credit waiver from the 120 credit cap for this degree to include 128 credits, which is not unusual for a degree offered in a College of Engineering.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the Bachelor of Science in Technology, Arts and Media University of Colorado Boulder, with waivers from gtPathways requirements and the 120 credit cap.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

C.R.S. §23-5-129 Governing boards - performance contract - authorization – operations

(6) While operating pursuant to a performance contract negotiated pursuant to this section, the governing board of a state institution of higher education:

(b) Need not consult with nor obtain approval from the Colorado commission on higher education to create, modify, or eliminate academic and vocational programs offered by the institution, so long as such creations, modifications, and eliminations are consistent with the institution's statutory role and mission. Institutions shall submit information to the department demonstrating that the creation or modification of an academic or career and

technical education program is consistent with the institution's statutory role and mission. The Colorado commission on higher education shall have the authority to override the creation or modification of an academic or vocational program if the change made by the governing board is inconsistent with the institution's statutory role and mission.

APPENDIX:

Appendix A: Supplemental Information

APPENDIX A: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

This supplemental information is unrelated to the proposed degree's fit with the institution's statutory role and mission. The following is summarized from the institution's proposal:

EVIDENCE OF NEED

According to the most recent (2010) US Bureau of Labor Statistics, the four categories of job growth and salaries that most closely match the BS TAM qualifications, program graduates will easily find work. In particular, projected growth in the categories of Web Developers and Software Developers is 22% and 28-32%, respectively (faster average and much faster than average). Mean pay for these jobs is, respectively, \$75,660 and \$90,530. Job opportunities in the other two relevant categories are projected to grow at an average rate. These results are borne out by a survey of graduates of the TAM Certificate and Minor programs offered at CU-Boulder. Of 86 program alumni who responded to the survey, 76 reported being employed, 6 reported attending graduate school; only one reported being unemployed.

We anticipate strong demand for this new degree. Over 750 undergraduate students currently enroll in either the TAM minor or TAM certificate, a number that has increased steadily since the program's inception in 1998. In Fall 2013 we surveyed the current cohort of TAM minor and certificate students, asking their level of interest in a TAM major. Of 109 students responding, 104 (96%) indicated that they would be "interested" (72%) or "very interested" (24%). Based on these data and the strong and steady growth in enrollment in the TAM minor and certificate programs, we are confident of student demand in a BS TAM degree. The program requirements are designed to provide flexibility for working adults.

DUPLICATION

The proposed new BS in Technology, Arts, and Media does not conflict or compete with any programs offered at higher education institutions in the State of Colorado. Two undergraduate programs at CU-Boulder are closest to the proposed BS TAM degree program. (1) The BA in Computer Science is geared primarily for students in Arts and Sciences fields to complement disciplinary work in the sciences. In contrast, the BS TAM program will attract and serve students whose interests run in the arts, humanities, and media. (2) The new College of Media, Communication, and Information recently approved BA in Media Production program focuses more on the 'Arts and Media' and less on 'Technology' components than the proposed BS in Technology, Arts, and Media.