Professional Master’s Program Guidelines

December 2016
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction .............................................................................................................. 2
Definition of Professional Master’s Degree Program .............................................. 2
Professional Master’s Degree Students – Policies and Procedures ....................... 3
Dual Degrees .......................................................................................................... 3
Remissions, Scholarships and Fellowships ............................................................. 3
Resident Enrollments ............................................................................................... 4
Academic Review and Approval Process ................................................................. 4
Process Review Committee ..................................................................................... 5
Professional Master’s Fee Approval Process ......................................................... 5
Program Pricing ....................................................................................................... 6
Revenue Sharing ...................................................................................................... 7
Digital Education Support ....................................................................................... 8
Purdue Marketing & Media Support ....................................................................... 9
Tuition & Fees .......................................................................................................... 9
Questions ................................................................................................................. 10
Attachment A New Degree Proposal Process Summary ...................................... 11
Attachment B Required Financial Reports to Establish/Renew a Degree Program .... 13
Attachment C Market Analysis ............................................................................... 15
Attachment D Checklist for Preparation of a Proposal ......................................... 16
Introduction

The concept of a Professional Master’s Degree at Purdue (PMD) was initiated to stimulate development of new terminal master’s degree programs that are focused on advanced credentialing for residential working professionals. As such, these degrees have a professional, rather than academic, career focus.

The process for developing PMDs involves two parts: 1) an academic proposal for a new degree program or concentration in an existing program, and 2) a request for market analysis as well as a rate request for the new program. These requests should be started together in order that both processes are completed in a timely manner.

Definition of Professional Master’s Degree Program

The characteristics of a Professional Master’s Degree program (PMD) at Purdue, as outlined below, provide a general framework for defining these degree programs. Within this definition, it is expected that the PMDs will incorporate variations and features unique to each program’s curriculum and target student population. In general these PMDs would not be considered appropriate preparation for those entering research careers whether in academia, industry, or government.

General Characteristics of a Professional Master’s Degree Program:

1. A terminal, non-thesis master’s degree.
2. Designed specifically to prepare university graduates for a career in industry and government, or to broaden the prospects of university graduates with careers in progress.
3. Incorporates a professional skills or competencies component (such as management, supervision, leadership, or entrepreneurship).
4. A full time program of one to two years in length; programs may allow part-time students.
5. Instruction is primarily residential (i.e., at least 51% occurs on campus).
6. Demonstrates clear differentiation between the PMD and other master’s degrees and concentrations within a department and the university.
7. Priced to include regular Board of Trustees (BOT) approved tuition and fees plus a market based fee increment; market based increment established through a rate approval process.
8. Receives a return of a portion of the tuition and fee revenue to the academic unit based upon an established distribution model.

Because of the many unique features that may be considered in the design of PMDs, units are encouraged to consult with the Graduate School on any questions related to a proposed program.
**Professional Master’s Degree Students – Policies and Procedures**

Graduate students in PMDs are subject to the *Policies and Procedures for Administering Graduate Student Programs* at [http://www.purdue.edu/gradschool/faculty/publications.html](http://www.purdue.edu/gradschool/faculty/publications.html). In addition, graduate students are admitted to and enrolled in a selected PMD and are subject to the specific requirements of that PMD as defined by the program’s academic unit (defined as college, school or department).

**Dual Degrees**

Students enrolled in a PMD are not eligible to pursue another graduate or undergraduate degree while pursuing the professional master’s degree.

In the case that a student enrolls in a program that provides an undergraduate degree enroute to a PMD, (a combined degree program, for example), the student’s primary curriculum, as identified by the academic unit, shall drive the assessment of fees and related revenue sharing. To facilitate the appropriate assessment, an academic unit will notify the Bursar’s Office, the Digital Education business office, and the Graduate School when students in such programs have advanced from the undergraduate level to the professional degree level. In general, this transition should be based upon the completion of undergraduate degree requirements.

These programs will have the same foregone revenue adjustment requirements as all PMDs that shift regular enrollments to PMDs (see *Foregone Revenue Adjustments* under *Revenue Sharing* section below).

**Remissions, Scholarships and Fellowships**

Financial aid will be applied to student accounts consistent with Federal Title IV guidelines no earlier than 10 days prior to the first day of classes; students will receive credit balances within 14 days from the date of application of financial aid funds to their account.

*Graduate Staff Remissions/Graduate Tuition Scholarships:* Students enrolled in a PMD program will not be eligible for graduate staff employment or any fee remissions associated with graduate assistantships. Professional master’s students are not eligible for graduate tuition scholarships. Admittance letters should clearly state these points. An audit report will be established by the Bursar to identify PMD students who have been placed on graduate appointments. Such an occurrence will be communicated to the academic unit and the Graduate School to address and resolve such a situation.

*Staff Fee Remissions:* Staff fee remissions are not available to Purdue staff participating in these programs.

*Scholarships - Purdue:* A Purdue scholarship fund may be established by the academic unit hosting the program. The unit’s share of the revenue from the PMD may be used to offset the cost of scholarships.

The cost of scholarships should be included in the proposed expenditure budget. Gift funds may also be used to provide scholarship support to students. Scholarship funds will be awarded at the discretion of the academic unit towards eligible student accounts.
Scholarships – Third-Party: Students sponsored by a third party will receive a deferment of fees based upon their submission of a tuition payment agreement by the sponsor prior to the due date for fees. Sponsors will be billed within the term of enrollment, (generally within the first eight (8) weeks of classes for a sixteen (16) week term). Students will be responsible for fees based upon non-payment of sponsored accounts. Non pass-through fees will be billed as a single line item described as “Prof Masters – xxxx” (“Prof Masters – Acctng”, for example); students who are aware of any specific descriptor required by a sponsor should notify the Bursar’s Office as early as possible.

Fellowships: Unit gift funds may be used for fellowship support for students enrolled in PMD programs.

Resident Enrollments
As Purdue is a state supported land grant institution, it is important that the university develops programs that are supportive of the state economy and accessible to Indiana residents. When departments perform their market analysis for PMDs, they will discover both geographic and content specific market niches. Some niches may be significantly focused on the state and regional audience (e.g., a weekend master’s program or a program for the orthopedic industry); other programs may have a much smaller intake of Indiana residents (e.g., a program in developmental agriculture delivered in part abroad with an international university partner); while a third program may have fairly uniform global interest across many regions and markets (e.g., a degree in information security). Because of potential market niches, it is recognized that the disciplines of some PMDs may have limited interest to students from Indiana. All programs, however, will be open to Indiana residents and units should target those applicants who are qualified.

Academic Review and Approval Process
Specific Graduate School approval is required to establish a PMD. Professional Master’s programs are governed by the Graduate School and must follow the procedures set forth in the Policies and Procedures for Administering Graduate Student Programs at http://www.purdue.edu/gradschool/faculty/publications.html
Departments may submit a request for a new degree program or for a current degree with a new concentration as discussed below. A summary of this process is provided in Attachment A. More information can be found in the Graduate School publication titled, Policies and Procedures for Administering Graduate Student Programs.

Both new degree programs and new concentrations will require a market analysis and a Purdue rate request. New degrees require review by the Graduate School and Graduate Council as part of their approval of the program. Concentrations are administratively approved by the Graduate School. Both processes are addressed in the Graduate School Manual.

New Degree Program: To establish a PMD as a new degree program, departments will need to review and follow the procedures for establishing a new degree program as outlined in Section I.F.1 in the Policies and Procedures for Administering Graduate Student Programs at http://www.purdue.edu/gradschool/faculty/publications.html
This process involves submission of a pre-proposal that is administratively reviewed by the Graduate School after consultation with the Provost’s office. Pre-proposals are also reviewed by a pre-proposal committee. This is followed by submission of a full proposal that is considered by the Graduate Council. Upon passage by the Graduate Council, the proposal is forwarded to the Provost’s Office for review and recommendation to the Board of Trustees. The program is then forwarded to the Indiana Commission for Higher Education for action and the Higher Learning Commission is informed of the new program.

**Current Degree Program with New Concentration:** To establish a PMD as a new concentration for an established master’s degree program, departments will need to review and follow the procedures outlined in the Policies and Procedures for Administering Graduate Student Programs Section I.H. and completing Graduate School Form 25 (found at [http://www.purdue.edu/gradschool/faculty/forms.html](http://www.purdue.edu/gradschool/faculty/forms.html)). The new concentration is reviewed and approved administratively within the Graduate School.

**Process Review Committee**

It is anticipated that some Professional Master’s programs will include unique program features that will require special consideration. Unique features, for example, may include partnerships with other institutions; programs with multi-site residences including foreign countries; or internship semesters with or without credit. Unique program components may raise questions about how to manage the processes related to fee assessment and collection, registration and student status, credit assignment, awarding of degrees, rate structure for fees, financial aid, and others.

A Process Review Committee will be established to consider the implementation of programs with unique components. The committee will be appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School and will include representation from the Graduate School, Digital Education, Marketing and Media, the Office of the Provost, the Offices of the Bursar, Registrar and Financial Aid, and the academic unit sponsoring the program (both programmatic and business office). The University’s Global Support Specialist (Comptroller unit) and representation from International Programs will participate when foreign institutions or experiences are involved. Others will be asked to participate on an as needed basis.

When PMDs are first presented to the Graduate School for consideration, proposals that include international components or other unique features as determined by the Graduate School will be referred to the Process Review Committee for review and resolution of process issues. The Process Review Committee will not advise on academic issues or make any academic programmatic recommendations. The Process Review Committee will be convened by the Graduate School representative to the Committee when a review is required.

**Professional Master’s Fee Approval Process  See Attachment B**

A Purdue rate request must be prepared for all new degree programs, existing degrees with new concentrations, and existing degrees based on the guidelines in Attachment B. An annual budget review via a rate request is required of all existing degrees. The initial rate request for a program must be reviewed and recommended for approval by the Graduate School; annual updates need to include a
distribution to the Graduate School following approval. Initial and renewal rate requests will be prepared and submitted jointly by the Directors of Financial Affairs of Digital Education and the sponsoring academic unit. The Director of Business Managers will provide final approval of the initial and renewal rate requests. Below is a list of the key items that need to be addressed in the rate request (complete list in Attachment B):

- Market analysis
- Present and proposed rates (not less than BOT approved rates for regular graduate programs)
  - Resident and nonresident rates
  - Academic year and summer rates
- Projected revenue
- Estimated expenses
- Enrollments and growth plan
- Potential loss of existing fee revenue

**New Degree Program:** In addition to the rate request, new degree programs also require Indiana Commission of Higher Education approval and will follow the preparation and approval guidelines documented in Attachment B. Rate requests are required with the initial implementation and must be updated each year. Graduate School review of the rate request is required with the initial program approval only. Copies of annual rate approvals should be distributed to the Graduate School.

**Current Degree Program with New Concentration:** Existing degree programs with a new concentration require approval by the Graduate School. Rate requests are required with the initial implementation and must be updated each year. Graduate School review of the rate request is required with the initial program approval only. Copies of annual rate approvals should be distributed to the Graduate School.

**Program Pricing**

**New Degree Programs and Current Degree Programs with New Concentrations:** Tuition and fees for PMDs will include two primary components: 1) regular BOT approved tuition and fee rates, and 2) a market based increment. Regular BOT approved fees, that is, general service fee, nonresident tuition, graduate differential fee (if applicable), and pass-through fees (technology fee, R&R fee, student wellness fee, other miscellaneous and incidental fees) will be augmented with a Professional Master’s fee that adjusts the overall fee to a market based level. See section on Digital Education Support: Market Analysis.

Fees for PMDs will not be approved at rates less than the BOT established tuition and fee rates for regular graduate programs. All new PMDs will be established using the new pricing and revenue sharing models outlined in this Professional Master’s Guidelines document.

**Conversion of Existing Masters Programs to PMDs:** Conversion of existing master’s programs to PMDs will be reviewed by sponsoring academic units to determine if the program should continue as a current established master’s program or if the program will convert to a PMD including the new pricing and revenue sharing models. Existing master’s programs will be grandfathered under the current model.
if the units determine this is the preferred approach. Current master’s programs that transition to a PMD will follow the same academic and rate approval processes as new PMDs.

**Revenue Sharing**

Fee revenue will be distributed across university units as outlined below:

- Pass-through fees (technology fee, R&R fee, student wellness fee, and other miscellaneous and incidental fees) will follow the current distribution process to directly support the purpose of these fees.
- Fee revenue from the general service fee, non-resident tuition, differential fee, and the Professional Master’s fee will be distributed 70% to the academic unit; 5% to a central fellowship endowment; and 25% to the central university budget.
- When a new PMD competes with an existing traditional program, or replaces an existing program, an adjustment for foregone revenue will be required prior to revenue distribution.
- Fee revenue available for distribution will reflect actual revenue received, that is, net of refunds due to attrition or unrealized revenue due to non-payment.

**Academic Unit:** The 70% distribution to the college, school, or department is expected to cover all direct costs of offering the program including instructional salaries and fringe benefits. If the curriculum of the program impacts instructional costs in other disciplines, this should also be addressed. As the PMDs have market based fees, it is anticipated that these programs will generate revenue in excess of departmental costs. If revenue exceeds departmental costs, the excess revenue will remain within the academic unit for expenditure as determined by the academic unit. If revenues do not fully offset departmental costs, it will be the responsibility of the academic unit to absorb those costs.

**Fellowship Endowment:** A distribution of 5% will provide a stream of revenue for growth in the fellowship endowment. The Graduate School will allocate these resources consistent with graduate education initiatives.

**Central University Budget:** The 25% distribution to the central university budget will fund the standard Digital Education per credit hour charges assessed to each PMD, additional central staffing and related costs associated with supporting growth in PMDs, and centrally funded instructional infrastructure costs.

Because PMD offerings can require unique processing requirements by central offices, individual monitoring is often necessary in order to administer such programs centrally. Staffing levels in centralized support units will be reviewed on an ongoing basis and may be adjusted based on consideration of the impact of new program development, student enrollment, and course offerings.

**Foregone Revenue Adjustments:** If a new PMD competes with an existing traditional program, or replaces an existing program, an adjustment will be made for the amount of the foregone fee revenue (i.e., current fee revenue from the existing program prior to conversion to a PMD) prior to the professional masters revenue distribution. For current undergraduate and master’s programs, fee revenue flows to the university general fund, while the PMD model distributes 70% of fee revenue to
the academic unit. The foregone revenue adjustment assures that the university general fund maintains its current revenue base. The foregone revenue adjustment should be documented in the rate approval process.

New degree program foregone revenue adjustment:

- The Graduate School will review submitted ‘Related Programs at the Proposing Institution’ within the Pre-Proposal Executive Summary with the Office of the Provost.
- The Office of the Provost will determine if the new PMD will attract students away from current programs, and provide an initial FTE count by program that is anticipated to be affected, to the Office of Financial Planning & Analysis (FP&A).
- FP&A will determine the revenue diverted from the university’s general fund (foregone revenue adjustment) associated with these FTE, and provide to requesting unit to assist in building the rate request.
- FP&A will coordinate the foregone revenue adjustment transfer with the Digital Education Business Office.
- Foregone revenue adjustment will be reviewed annually and adjusted for Tuition & Fee Increases, as well as for any changes to FTE impact of other programs.

PMD replacing an existing program revenue adjustment:

- Prior to submitting a new rate request, unit should get programmatic approval from the Office of the Provost to convert degree to PMD, and contact FP&A to determine the foregone revenue adjustment.
- FP&A will coordinate with the unit and the Bursar’s Office to identify appropriate historical annual Tuition and Fee revenue average, which will become the foregone revenue adjustment.
- FP&A will coordinate the foregone revenue adjustment transfer with the Digital Education Business Office.
- Foregone revenue adjustment will be reviewed annually and adjusted for Tuition & Fee increases, as well as for any changes to FTE impact of other programs.

**Digital Education Support**

**Standard Digital Education Services:** The Digital Education charges that will be funded through the central university 25% revenue share will support the standard Digital Education services of financial management and reporting, revenue distribution, and coordination services. These charges are intended to provide a cost recovery mechanism for Digital Education services and to allow increases in support staff and services as the number and size of PMDs increases. Separate accounts will be established in Digital Education for each program; costs booked within Digital Education will be assessed to the revenue distribution share of the sponsoring unit.

**Market Analysis:** A market analysis will be required to determine if a PMD fee should be added to the current program fee. Market data is critical to establishing the PMD fee and will be required for the rate approval. The market analysis may determine the PMD fee should be zero. See Attachment C for an
outline of an appropriate market analysis. Though academic units may conduct their own market research, Digital Education currently contracts with Eduventures for market analysis services. All units proposing a PMD will have access to this service at no additional charge to the unit or to the PMD. The market analysis should be included in the rate request and materials submitted to the Graduate School for program approval. It should be noted that this analysis will take time and is a primary reason for making sure all parties, i.e. faculty, business office, Digital Education, are aware of the proposal at the time it is initiated.

**Non-Traditional Costs:** While instructional costs and departmental support expenses will be charged to accounts within the academic unit, any non-traditional expenses will be recorded within the Digital Education account structure. Non-traditional expenses include costs typically not supported on general funds.

**Purdue Marketing & Media Support**

Purdue Marketing and Media (M&M), working in conjunction with Digital Education, has the capability to assist units in identifying potential clientele and in promoting their PMDs to this audience. While some programs currently exist with a built-in customer base, other units may require this type of strategic marketing assistance as well as creative assistance. Units are encouraged to use these services when the expertise is not available within their academic unit. A separate fee at the existing hourly rate will be charged for M&M marketing services. This fee can be budgeted in the cost plan for the PMD.

All marketing materials should be reviewed by the Graduate School in advance of release to the public. This will assure that the degree is appropriately stated to meet the guidelines of the Indiana Commission for Higher Education and the Higher Learning Commission. Academic units developing their own marketing materials must also ensure their materials are in brand and the Graduate School review occurs.

**Tuition and Fees**

The Board of Trustees’ approved fee schedule includes a provision for assessing a market based increment for each PMD (effective in FY14). The provision allows a separate and distinct increment for each program based on market analysis and approval through the rate request process.

**Fee Assessment:** All new PMDs will be assessed fees based upon the pricing established via the rate request for each degree program. Fee invoices will be delivered at least one month prior to the program start date, due on the first day of classes of the academic term, consistent with traditional campus timelines where possible.

**Refunds:** Refund of fees will follow the institutional fee refund policy found at [http://www.purdue.edu/bursar/tuition/refundwithdrawals/refundpolicy.html](http://www.purdue.edu/bursar/tuition/refundwithdrawals/refundpolicy.html). Consistent with that policy, technology, course fees, and repair and rehabilitation fees are considered to be non-refundable. Other fees and expenses, including general service fees, non-resident tuition, and the market based increment for the PMD would be considered refundable.
Questions

The following offices should be contacted for assistance in the process of establishing and managing PMDs:

- **Academic Issues**: Graduate School, Graduate Programs Office
- **Academic Infrastructure**: Office of the Registrar
- **Market Analysis**: Digital Education, Senior Associate Director
- **Account Management and Reporting**: Digital Education, Business Office
- **Fees and Refunds**: Office of the Bursar
- **Rate Approval Process**: Director of Financial Affairs for College/School/Department
PROFESSIONAL MASTER’S DEGREE PROGRAMS
NEW DEGREE PROPOSAL PROCESS SUMMARY

Pre-Proposal Review Process
Pre-proposals are typically reviewed by a Pre-Proposal Review Committee composed of (a) the chair of the relevant Graduate Council Area Committee, (b) a regular area committee faculty member, and (c) a member of the Graduate School. The area committee chair reports the recommendation of the committee to the Dean of the Graduate School to either (a) request a full proposal or (b) return the pre-proposal unapproved. If the pre-proposal is not approved, it may be revised and resubmitted the following academic year.

- Pre-proposals should follow the format and address the criteria specified in the section titled Pre-Proposal Format and Content.
- Pre-proposals should be sent electronically to gradcncl@purdue.edu and addressed to the Dean of the Graduate School. All pre-proposals should be sent from the head of the degree granting academic unit and endorsed by the dean of the school/college. Pre-proposals from regional campuses should also have the signature of the Director of Graduate Studies or equivalent.
- The Graduate School consults with the Office of the Provost regarding potential concerns.
- The Graduate Programs Office in the Graduate School conducts an administrative review of the pre-proposal and consults with the Pre-Proposal Review Committee. The committee may seek feedback from corresponding degree granting units.
- The Dean of the Graduate School makes the decision to either (a) request a full proposal or (b) return the pre-proposal unapproved, typically based on the recommendation of the Pre-Proposal Review Committee.

Proposal Review Process

- After receiving the request from the dean, the full proposal should be submitted electronically to gradcncl@purdue.edu and addressed to the Dean of the Graduate School.
- The proposal should follow the format and guidelines specified in the section titled Proposal Format and Content.
- The Graduate Programs Office in the Graduate School conducts an administrative review and forwards all comments with the proposal to the appropriate Graduate Council Area Committee for review and recommendation to the Council. The area committee chair may seek feedback from corresponding degree granting units.
- In parallel, non-academic reviews are conducted by the Office of Institutional Research Assessment and Effectiveness (OIRAE), the Office of Financial Analysis and Planning, and, if required, the Director of Digital Education and Associate Vice Provost.
- The area chair presents the proposal to the Graduate Council for consideration. The Council may elect to approve, not approve, or table the proposal.

Conversion of Existing Masters Programs to PMDs
Conversion of existing master’s programs to PMDs will be reviewed by sponsoring academic units to determine if the program should continue as a currently established master’s program or if the program
will convert to a PMD including the new pricing and revenue sharing models. Existing master’s programs will be grandfathered under the current model if the units determine this is the preferred approach. Current master’s programs that transition to a PMD will follow the same academic and rate approval processes as new PMDs.

Record of PMD Programs
The Graduate School will maintain a listing of all approved PMDs. This will be considered the official list.
PROFESSIONAL MASTER’S DEGREE PROGRAMS
REQUIRED FINANCIAL REPORTS TO ESTABLISH/RENEW A DEGREE PROGRAM

Purdue Rate Request (New Degree, New Concentration in an Existing Degree, and Existing Degree Programs):

College/school requests a market analysis (currently contracted with Eduventures through Digital Education). Alternate market data can be used if provided from a reputable source. In these cases, any costs will be the responsibility of the unit.

College/school prepares rate request and 5-year net income and enrollment projections.

The rate request will cover the following items:

- Department
- Effective date
- Purpose/services
- Present and proposed rates (includes peer analysis)
- Budget explanation
- Five year revenue and expenditure budget, net income and enrollment projections, along with the projected attrition rate
- Potential loss of existing fee revenue
- Income collection/billing
- Income disposition
- Refund policy - Should follow existing Purdue University guidelines located on the Bursar website: [http://www.purdue.edu/business/bursar/refunds.html](http://www.purdue.edu/business/bursar/refunds.html)
- Any previous approval (if existing)
- Approvals (required signatures):
  - Existing degree: Department Head and Dean of College/School; Associate Dean and Dean of Digital Education; Senior Director of Business Management
  - New degree or new specialization of an existing degree (additional signatures): Dean of Graduate School; Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Diversity (or delegate – Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning); and Senior Vice President and Assistant Treasurer (or delegate – Director of Business Managers).
- Notifications – All approvals shall be reported to the Graduate Programs Office of the Graduate School upon completion.

Each college/school is required to submit an annual budget review to Digital Education (updated rate request).
**Indiana Commission for Higher Education New Degree Proposals (Enrollment and Budget Data):**

College/school completes the required Commission documentation (current guidelines include tables with enrollment data and budgeted revenue and expenditure data):

- **Developing New Academic Program Proposals** based on the guidelines, policies, and procedures established by the Indiana Commission for Higher Education, and
- In addition, for a blended degree, the forms for **Proposing Degree Programs to be delivered via Distance Technology** based on the **Policy on Delivering Degree Programs through Distance Education Technology**.

**Review Process for Rate Requests**

On-Campus or Blended – Approvals for New Degree, New Concentration of Existing Degree, and Existing Degree Programs

- College/School
- Digital Education
- Director of Business Management (delegate)

Additional signatures required for New Degree Programs and New Concentration of Existing Degrees (On Campus or Blended)

- Dean of Graduate School
- Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Diversity (or delegate – Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning)
- Senior Vice President and Assistant Treasurer (or delegate – Director of Business Managers)

All approvals shall be reported to the Graduate Programs Office of the Graduate School upon completion.

**Review Process for Indiana Commission for Higher Education (where appropriate):**

New Degree Programs (proposals are completed and routed for review and approval):

On-Campus (or Blended) – Review and Approvals

- College/School
- Graduate School
- Graduate Council
- Financial Planning and Analysis
- Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Diversity
- Board of Trustees
- Indiana Commission for Higher Education/Higher Learning Commission
PROFESSIONAL MASTER’S DEGREE PROGRAMS
MARKET ANALYSIS

While an external market analysis for a new professional master’s degree is preferable, units are allowed to perform their own analysis. A complete analysis would include discussion of the following:

What is the proposed program? What is the focus or specialization of the program?

Fit with the University and Department – How does the program fit with the mission of the university? Does the university have a recognized competence in this area, or will new faculty capabilities need to be acquired? How will the program be distinctive or differentiated from competitors?

The target student market for the program – What are the demographic characteristics of the target student population (age, geographic scope, prior preparation, current employment or pre-employment)? What is the size of the target population and anticipated growth in the pool?

What is the value proposition for the degree – What are the employment prospects for graduates of the program? What is the anticipated salary for graduates? What are the anticipated trends in these factors? What opportunities await students who complete the degree? Will students be prepared for new careers or certifications?

Characteristics of peer institutions and programs – Is there existing competition delivering the degree? Who are they? What, if anything, makes their programs distinctive? If they are traditional institutions, are they peer or aspirant schools? What are the program sizes? What are the current enrollments and trends in enrollment? What is the format of the delivery model? What markets have these programs targeted? What are the prices and trends for pricing of these programs? Is the significant financial aid provided? If this is truly a unique, ground breaking degree, who would be the likely competitors if a market is established? Will the degree be easily copied?

Program content, delivery, and cost structure – What courses and experiences will make up the proposed degree? How will the content be delivered and where? What costs will need to be incurred in development of the program? What is the five year cost structure of delivery? What support infrastructure will be needed outside of instructional cost?

It is expected the analysis will be supported with references to third party data from appropriate sources like peer institutions, library data sets, governmental or foundation reports, employment or census data.
The characteristics of a Professional Master’s Degree program (PMD) at Purdue are outlined in the attached Program Guidelines. In general PMDs are designed as a terminal master’s degree that prepares a student by combining subject matter training with exposure to techniques important in managing a professional position. The PMD would not be considered appropriate preparation for those entering research careers whether in academia, industry, or government.

The concept of a Professional Master’s Degree at Purdue (PMD) was initiated to stimulate development of new terminal master’s degree programs that are focused on advanced credentialing for residential working professionals. As such, these degrees have a professional, rather than academic, career focus.

As a starting point, existing programs were allowed to develop new concentrations in existing programs as a prototype before developing an entirely new degree program. Thus the goal of these program concentrations is to be converted to a degree program. As such, newly developed concentrations for PMDs will be reviewed after five (5) years and a decision made to either delete the concentration or initiate the process of moving forward with a new degree proposal.

This process for developing PMDs involves two parts: 1) an academic proposal for a new degree program or concentration in an existing program, and 2) a financial request for market analysis as well as a rate request for the new program. These requests should be started together in order that both processes are completed in a timely manner.

1. General:
   a. Organizational meeting: In all cases the PMD process should begin with an organizational meeting among the faculty member proposing the new program/concentration, the DFA in the appropriate College, and representatives from Digital Education and from the Graduate School.
   b. Planning: In this meeting the process shall be outlined and a timeline for all parts of the process will be developed and adopted. The timeline will include target dates for completion of each part of the process.

   a. Prepare and submit pre-proposal according to directions provided in the document Pre-Proposal Format and Content. Submit to gradcncl@purdue.edu.
   b. You will be informed as to the outcome of the review of the pre-proposal.
   c. The full proposal should be prepared using the format and guidelines in Proposal Format and Content. The proposal is submitted to gradcncl@purdue.edu.
   d. The proposal is then reviewed within the Graduate Programs Office of the Graduate School and forwarded to the appropriate Area Committee of the Graduate Council for
e. The Area Committee chair presents the proposal to the Graduate Council for consideration. The council may elect to approve, not approve, or table the proposal.

3. Financial Process (summarized in Attachment B of the Program Guidelines)
   a. Market analysis: Usually conducted by Digital Education through Eduventures, but may be done by the initiating program or by another vendor.
   b. Advance on Revenue: If a program needs funds to cover start-up costs, the request must fulfill several requirements detailed in the Program Guidelines (pg. 6).
   c. Rate Request and Fee Approval Process: An outline of the process to be followed in preparing the rate request in order to get approval of fees for the PMD is included in Attachment B of the Program Guidelines. Items included in this request include:
      i. Market analysis
      ii. Present and proposed rates (not less than BOT approved rates)
      iii. Projected revenue
      iv. Estimated expenses
      v. Enrollment and growth plan
      vi. Advance in revenue option
      vii. Potential loss of existing fee revenue

4. Notifications: In order that all parties are kept informed of the progress of proposals, at each stage for each approval, the Graduate Programs Office of the Graduate School shall be informed of the approval. Upon completing all approvals for a proposal, the Office will inform all interested parties of the outcome. Those include:
   a. Faculty member and department head of program initiating proposal
   b. Dean of appropriate College/School
   c. DFA of program initiating proposal
   d. Digital Education
   e. Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Diversity
   f. Bursar
   g. Registrar
   h. Financial Aid