Approved by the Board of Trustees

March 17, 2022

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Board Meeting

March 17, 2022

## ELIMINATE THE MASTER OF ARTS IN LIBERAL AND INTEGRATIVE STUDIES, COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES, SPRINGFIELD

**Action:** Eliminate the Master of Arts in Liberal and Integrative Studies, College of

Liberal Arts and Sciences

**Funding:** No New Funding Required

The Interim Chancellor, University of Illinois Springfield, and Vice President, University of Illinois System with the advice of the Springfield Senate, recommends approval of a proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to eliminate the Master of Arts in Liberal and Integrative Studies.

The Master of Arts in Liberal and Integrative Studies is an individualized program of study designed to serve students whose learning objectives are not entirely met through existing curricula. Established decades ago as the Master of Arts in Individual Option, the program offers students the opportunity to design a degree consistent with their own educational goals, using available institutional and area resources. The program structure emphasizes the integration of different disciplines using a variety of instructional methods to form an individualized academic experience.

No students have been admitted to the program for over two years. Due to its individualized nature, the degree is costly to sustain from an administrative, budgetary, and faculty standpoint, and it has been challenging to meet evaluation and reporting requirements. Students seeking a Liberal and Integrative Studies Master’s degree are required to enroll in an independent study or field project with a faculty member, both of which are time-consuming for faculty to manage and take faculty away from their regular course and departmental responsibilities. For these reasons, it has become increasingly difficult to recruit and coordinate affiliated faculty for the program. Consequently, there are currently no faculty assigned to the program to provide instruction, assessment, and administrative oversight. In addition, lengthy and complex program processes have made it difficult for some students to navigate through the program, particularly without intensive faculty mentoring.

This proposal seeks to eliminate via phasedown the M.A. in Liberal and Integrative Studies. Students currently enrolled in the program will be allowed to complete the degree within allowable time limits. No additional funding is required or requested to eliminate the degree program.

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes, The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The Interim Executive Vice President and Vice President for Academic Affairs concurs with this recommendation. The University Senates Conference has indicated that no further Senate jurisdiction is involved.

The President of the University of Illinois System recommends approval. This action is subject to further review by the Illinois Board of Higher Education, but approval is not required.