BACKGROUND AND REQUEST

OHIO UNIVERSITY
Master of Science in Athletic Training

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATIONS

This program clearly meets Regents' standards for graduate degree programs. The Regents' Advisory Committee on Graduate Study voted unanimous approval to create a separate Master of Science in Athletic Training. The Master of Science in Athletic Training is an existing program of study currently offered as a track in the Master of Science in Recreation and Sport Studies. The proposed degree designation change for the graduate program in Athletic Training more accurately represents the course and focus of the students' graduate education; the request does not represent a new degree program. There were no serious concerns raised in the review.

Request: Ohio University's School of Recreation and Sport Sciences Division of Athletic Training requests a degree designation change to a Master of Science in Athletic Training. The Master of Science in Athletic Training is an existing program of study, currently offered as a track in the Master of Science in Recreation and Sport Studies. Athletic training graduate students currently share the same degree title with three other graduate programs in the School of Recreation and Sport Sciences (coaching education, athletic administration, and recreation studies). The proposed change more accurately represents the course and focus of the students' graduate education. This request is being sought based on recommendations from the National Athletic Trainers' Association.

Program Purpose/Mission: The proposed degree designation request will change the degree awarded to students who successfully complete the graduate athletic training (AT) program from a Master of Science in Recreation and Sport Studies to a Master of Science in Athletic Training. The proposed change will maintain Ohio University's competitive advantage relative to other master's degree programs. Strategically, a Master of Science in Athletic training degree will help the University recruit quality students and increase the national visibility of the program. The majority of post-professional programs (Ohio University's competitors) offer a degree in athletic training. Employers are placing an increased emphasis on a "tagged" degree. (A tagged degree requires specialized course work, and for this request, the specialized course work is in athletic training. A tagged degree incorporates the name of the major into the degree title.) Historically, most employers of athletic trainers simply required "a master's degree." Based on a recommendation from the National Athletic Trainers' Association, post-professional programs are strongly encouraged to grant a degree in athletic training. Effective 2011, all undergraduate entry-level athletic training

programs must result in a degree in athletic training. Ohio University's undergraduate program has been ahead of this curve. The proposed program will more accurately reflect the graduate students' course of study and recognize their advanced degree in their field of study.

Enrollments: Eighteen students graduated in the Class of 2008. Forty two applicants for the class entering in June 2008 were interviewed. Of this group, 27 offers were extended, of which 22 (81%) enrolled. Total program enrollment is capped based on the number of stipend supported graduate assistant positions that are available and is dependent on the number of faculty. The program has seen a consistent increase in enrollment over the past four years, with 10 students in 2005-06, 12 students in 2006-07, and 23 enrolled for the class of 2008-09. With the current number of FTE dedicated to the program, the program will remain at an enrollment of 20 to 30 students.

Curriculum: The Masters' degree program has a one year and two year option for degree completion. The one-year (4 quarter) program consists of 60-62 hours for degree completion, and the two-year (7 quarter) program consists of 71-99 hours for degree completion. The one and two year academic plans, and the ability to choose from clinical placements in the intercollegiate athletics, intercollegiate club sports, or secondary school setting, allows for personalization of the students' educational plan. The proposed Master of Science in Athletic Training Program curriculum will provide quality graduate education that provides students with professional and scholarly development opportunities in research, clinical skills, teaching and ultimately, it will foster scholarly practitioners for the future.

Faculty, Facilities and Resources: The Division of Athletic Training is one of five Divisions housed in the College of Health and Human Service's School of Recreation and Sport Sciences. The Athletic Training Division is staffed by three Group I faculty members (1 associate professor; 2 assistant professors) a Group II Instructor, and three doctoral students. No additional funding, facilities or faculty are required for the proposed degree designation change to Master of Science in Athletic Training.

Evidence of Need: Professional education of athletic trainers is still primarily performed at the baccalaureate level, with 343 institutions offering this program and only 18 programs offer an entry-level master's degree program in Athletic Training. Professional expectations and employer demands place an increased emphasis on post-professional education. Employer demand for graduates of accredited post-professional education program has increased, and this trend is expected to continue. Applications to the graduate program continue to increase. Application trends for the past four years are; 2004-05: 34, 2005-06: 39, 2006-07: 50, 2007-08: 68.

The National Athletic Trainers' Association Post-professional Accreditation Standard IV.D states: "Athletic training has a unique body of knowledge and, therefore, should be treated as a discipline. The institution is strongly encouraged to grant a Masters degree (e.g., M.S., M.A., M.Ed.) in Athletic Training." (Additional information available at: http://nataec.org/EducationPrograms/PostProfessionalEducation/tabid/97/Default.aspx.)

End of Comment Period: December 15, 2008
No Comments Received, Recommend Approval

Approved

12/22/08

Eric D. Fingerhut, Chancellor — Date