VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

Academic and Student Affairs Committee

University of Washington Tacoma, Urban Studies Program – Master of Arts in Community Planning Degree

RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is the recommendation of the administration and the Academic and Student Affairs Committee that the Board of Regents grant authority to the graduate faculty of the Urban Studies Program at the University of Washington, Tacoma, WA to offer the Master of Arts in Community Planning (MACP) degree program, effective Autumn Quarter 2016. The degree program will have provisional status with a review to be conducted by the Graduate School in the 2021-2022 academic year. At such time that continuing status is granted, a ten-year review cycle would begin.

BACKGROUND

In February 2015, the Graduate School received a proposal from the graduate faculty of the Urban Studies Program at the University of Washington, Tacoma, WA requesting authority to offer a state-funded Master of Arts in Community Planning degree program. The proposed degree will be a 60 credit program, with a projected annual cohort of 20 students and tuition at the Tier II level.

The Master of Arts in Community Planning degree program builds upon the Urban Studies Program’s undergraduate programs in Urban Studies and Sustainable Urban Development. Program graduates will be prepared to be competent collaborative professionals who work with and empower community constituents, influencing processes of policy formation, resource generation, community change, and urban development. It will strengthen the overall mission of UW Tacoma as an urban-serving, metropolitan research university by developing well-trained graduates whose knowledge and skills inform community goals and advance positive urban change. The program’s emphasis on urban social issues, community development, and urban problem solving, and its commitment to training students to think critically and creatively, to work collaboratively in the interest of creating sustainable communities and to effectively communicate knowledge in a variety of ways is a direct expression of the UWT mission.

The MACP degree program responds to a need in the South Sound region, the State of Washington, and the nation for civic-minded urban professionals who can merge theory with practice, knowledge with strategy, and understanding of context and power with the skills to effect positive change. A unique characteristic of the program is the intentional integration of academic theory and
VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

Academic and Student Affairs Committee

University of Washington Tacoma, Urban Studies Program – Master of Arts in Community Planning Degree (continued p. 2)

professional methods within classes and throughout the curriculum. The focus of Community Planning at UW Tacoma responds to the nature of regional development dynamics in the greater Puget Sound metropolitan area, to require elevation and prioritization of community needs relative to institutionalized systems of planning.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL

The Master of Arts in Community Planning proposal was evaluated by faculty with expertise in the field from the Department of Urban Planning and Policy, College of Urban Planning and Public Affairs, University of Illinois at Chicago, IL, and the School of Social Ecology, University of California at Irvine, CA. The evaluators provided the faculty constructive criticism that contributed to strengthening the proposed program. Both evaluators indicated that the program responds to current trends in the field.

The Academic Program Curriculum Committee (APCC) at UW Tacoma reviewed and approved the final proposal on September 23, 2015. The APCC unanimously recommended that the proposal be forwarded to the Board of Regents of the University of Washington for final approval. The Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs concurred with the APCC recommendation.

The Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School and the Interim Provost have reviewed and approved this recommendation for the proposed Master of Arts in Community Planning degree program.