

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-FLINT
REGENTS COMMUNICATION**

ACTION REQUEST

SUBJECT: Master of Science in Accounting

ACTION REQUESTED: Approval to grant the Master of Science in Accounting through the School of Management at the University of Michigan-Flint

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2012

The School of Management at the University of Michigan-Flint proposes to offer a Master of Science in Accounting (MSA) degree. The proposed graduate program is designed to address the needs of School of Management students and is intended to be offered on a cohort and mixed-mode format similar to the NetPlus MBA program. The demand for this program is clearly delineated in a recent consulting study and will serve the needs of our constituents seeking a quality accounting program in preparation for the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) exam.

Several statewide and national initiatives to enhance the educational training of accountants have occurred during the last decade. Most tangible of these are the 150-hour requirements that CPA candidates are required to complete for licensing. Accounting continues to be one of the most demanded majors/concentration areas by employers at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. All national and state indicators show that job prospects for accountants are expected to continue growing for the next decade. The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics *Occupational Outlook Handbook* estimates a 22% increase in accounting employment positions during the decade from 2008-2018. In addition, in 2010 approximately 40% of new employees hired by CPA firms held masters degrees, up from 26% in 2008; conversely, new hires by these firms holding only bachelor's degrees decreased from 56% to 40%.

The 150-hour requirement in Michigan (and most states) does not mandate a Master's degree, but this is the first choice of most CPA candidates to fulfill the requirement. UM-Flint and its School of Management offer programs to fulfill the 150 hour requirement, but they are less appealing to many candidates than a focused, comprehensive accounting master's degree. To fully serve prospective CPAs in our market area, the School of Management proposes to provide a more comprehensive and focused graduate accounting program. The MSA program is targeted to students who have completed a bachelor's degree in accounting, in other business disciplines, or in non-business disciplines.

The MSA program requires a minimum of 30 credit hours to be completed over 15 to 24 months employing the UM-Flint NetPlus teaching approach, which blends online and in-class learning. Students without a significant undergraduate accounting background will be required to complete up to 6 additional credit hours of foundation courses. These requirements are comparable to our regional peers and aspirant MSA programs.

The proposed Master of Science in Accounting (MSA) degree has been thoroughly reviewed and supported by the University of Michigan-Flint's Graduate Programs, Academic Affairs Advisory Committee, Chancellor's Advisory Committee for Budget and Strategic Planning, Academic Assessment Committee, the provost and chancellor. The program will be implemented upon approval from the Presidents Council of State Universities of Michigan, pending the Board of Regents approval.

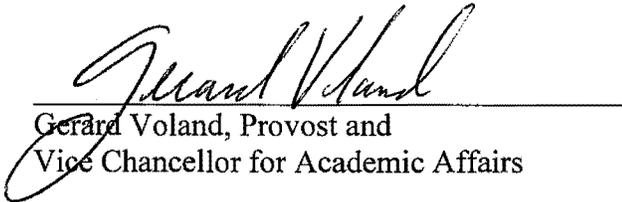
Based upon the extensive research and plans that have been completed, the University of Michigan-Flint requests approval to grant the Master of Science in Accounting (MSA) through the School of Management effective January 1, 2012.

RECOMMENDED BY:



Vahid Lotfi, Senior Associate Provost and
Dean of Graduate Programs and
Acting Dean, School of Management

RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED BY:



Gerard Volland, Provost and
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs



Ruth J. Person, Chancellor
University of Michigan-Flint

December 2011