THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
REGENTS COMMUNICATION

SUBJECT: Establish Quantitative Methods in the Social Sciences Program,
           College of Literature, Science, and the Arts

ACTION REQUESTED: Approval to Allow the Quantitative Methods in the Social Sciences
           Program to Appoint Faculty

EFFECTIVE DATE: December 1, 2019

With the endorsement of the Executive Committee of the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts, the Quantitative Methods in the Social Sciences (QMSS) Program in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts was approved as a "funding only" unit and was given a budget for teaching by faculty with appointments in other schools and colleges. The purpose of this request is to establish the QMSS Program and to give the program the status of an "instructional unit," enabling it to appoint faculty, but not be a tenure home.

Today data are being generated on every individual from "cell to society" at a rate and a volume that make them difficult to harness. Similarly, the technology used to understand and store these vast complex data is rapidly advancing. The QMSS Program, is a major initiative designed to build an intellectual community of scholars doing research and teaching at this leading edge, who will offer up-to-date training in these methods to LSA undergraduate and graduate students.

In October of 2016, a group of eight LSA faculty were appointed to serve on the Quantitative Methods and Social Science Committee charged with developing "a strategic plan for the quantitative social sciences at the University of Michigan that would leverage the strengths of our social science and statistics faculty, other data scientists on campus, and our research footprint across campus."

With the committee's work now completed, LSA proposes to establish the QMSS Program as an instructional unit with an interdisciplinary group of affiliated LSA faculty offering cutting-edge instruction and pedagogical practices in the quantitative analyses of large, complex, and naturally occurring data. The QMSS faculty represent an interdisciplinary group of scholars from several social science fields, such as Economics, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, and Statistics. QMSS faculty will also develop and launch a new undergraduate minor with the aim of providing students with the quantitative skills necessary to address large societal problems. The goal of the QMSS program is to train the next generation of social scientists in the sophisticated methods and analytical techniques needed to use all types of quantitative data. Graduate students and post-doctoral fellows will assist with the teaching and training of undergraduate students while also conducting, in collaboration with QMSS faculty, research that exemplifies how best to use these statistical methods.

The QMSS faculty hope to launch the undergraduate curriculum in the fall of 2020 with a set of core introductory courses, and will work to bridge courses into existing majors in several social science departments commencing in early 2022. The QMSS program will build and maintain a repository of resources available to all students and will provide resources as well as training to other faculty and graduate students interested in learning these new quantitative skills.

In order to launch the QMSS program, LSA has committed and the College Executive Committee has approved funding for 2.0 tenure track FTE faculty lines last year that will be used to help fund joint appointments with the faculty members' home units. Additionally, LSA plans to provide a full-time staff director, two full-time, highly skilled lecturers with advanced statistical expertise, and two post-doctoral fellows. Finally, LSA is committed to providing QMSS with appropriate space on campus.

We respectfully request approval to establish the Quantitative Methods in the Social Sciences Program as an instructional unit with the ability to offer joint faculty appointments in the program, but not be a tenure home.

RECOMMENDED BY: RECOMMENDATION ENDORSED BY:

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Anne Curzan, Dean   Amy K. Dittmar
Geneva Smitherman Collegiate Professor of   Acting Provost and Executive Vice President
English Language and Literature, Linguistics, for Academic Affairs
and Education
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December 2019