



LOYOLA UNIVERSITY MARYLAND

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Office of the President

Sent via EMAIL

July 23, 2020

James D. Fielder, Jr., Ph.D.
Secretary of Higher Education
Maryland Higher Education Commission
6 N. Liberty Street, 10th Floor
Baltimore, MD 21201

RE: Loyola University Maryland Response to Morgan State University's Objection – Information Systems and Data Analytics BBA

Dear Secretary Fielder:

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the objection letter submitted by Morgan State University (MSU) regarding Loyola University Maryland's proposed Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) in Information Systems and Data Analytics (ISDA). Loyola received notification of MSU's objection on July 17, 2020. Pursuant to MHEC's instructions, we have reviewed the objection and offer this response in due course.

Loyola University Maryland recently submitted proposals for all six of its existing areas of concentration in the Loyola Business BBA program to become discrete majors. This endeavor was part of a much larger university-wide effort to maintain currency, relevance, and vitality of undergraduate education at Loyola. These efforts began with the university's 2016 strategic planning initiative that included an emphasis on student agency in academic studies. The Business BBA program featured in the faculty discussions about Reimagining the Undergraduate Curriculum because of the large proportion and breadth of course requirements for the BBA concentrations, which impede business students from pursuing greater depth in their fields or more breadth outside of the business school. The faculty deliberations about curricular renewal culminated in hard-won approvals through shared governance for changes to Loyola's Core Curriculum and some majors in early 2020. These six undergraduate business major proposals are part of a whole—they represent the re-design of the undergraduate experience in the Sellinger School of Business.

The objection from Morgan State University, in following the parameters for objection laid out in COMAR 13B.02.03.27, centers on "unreasonable program duplication which would cause demonstrable harm to another institution," primarily focused on a claim that the implementation of the existing Loyola program as a stand-alone major would harm MSU's program enrollment. We respectfully assert that the proposed major would not cause harm to MSU's program enrollment, and we provide data below to support our assertion. In addition, MSU's letter highlights the similarities between the business schools, seemingly as a way to indicate that Loyola's proposed major will attract students away from the strong and growing MSU program in Information Systems. We believe the assertion is based on a misinterpretation of the enrollment projections in Loyola's proposal. This is explained in detail below.

1) Mission and student population

The evidence below demonstrates that Loyola and Morgan State University are attracting from different student populations, and in part, that is due to the differences in the institutions: Morgan State University is Maryland's preeminent urban public research university with an undergraduate population of more than 6,400 students; Loyola University Maryland is a Jesuit, Catholic private master's university with a highly residential undergraduate population of fewer than 3,900 undergraduate students. Loyola recruitment plans for each academic year target fewer than 1,100 new first-time full-time students for the entire university, and its students primarily come from outside Maryland. Loyola attracts undergraduate students from 40 states and 43 countries.

Morgan State University's letter mentioned other universities in Maryland that offer information systems programs as an indication that Maryland is already well-served by the existing majors. However, none of those institutions, including Morgan State University, Coppin State University, Frostburg State University, Towson University, University of Maryland Baltimore County, University of Maryland College Park, University of Maryland Global Campus, Mount Saint Mary's University, Notre Dame of Maryland University, Salisbury University, Stevenson University, Washington Adventist University, are private institutions holding AACSB business accreditation. Loyola's proposal broadens the options to include a private institution with AACSB business accreditation. Loyola University Maryland is the only Jesuit, Catholic university in the state, and it is one of only 27 in the nation. Currently, Maryland high school students who seek a major in information systems at a private university with an AACSB-accredited business school must attend an out-of-state school.

In fact, Loyola's largest competition for business school majors, according to the most recent cross-application data available from the National Student Clearinghouse, is from private Catholic out-of-state institutions with AACSB business accreditation: Saint Joseph's University (Pennsylvania), Fordham University (New York), Fairfield University (Connecticut), Providence College (Rhode Island), and Villanova University (Pennsylvania). Morgan State University is ranked 234th (with one student) in the list of institutions from Loyola's cross-application data. We believe the data clearly demonstrate that we are not competing for the same students who are attracted to the public AACSB-accredited Earl G. Graves School of Business and Management, as MSU asserted in its objection. Further, we think the data indicate that the lack of a private AACSB-accredited information systems and data analytics major in Maryland could mean that the state is losing Maryland high school graduates to out-of-state schools. It is worth noting that four of the five out-of-state competitors listed above offer a bachelor's degree information systems or business analytics.

Please note that no other institution objected to the proposed information systems and data analytics program from Loyola.

2) Academic program and objectives

Both Morgan State University's and Loyola University Maryland's business schools hold accreditation from AACSB, International. To fulfill the standards of AACSB accreditation, the programs would be expected to share broad similarities in course work and objectives. It is worth pointing out that the Loyola program would result in a BBA degree, which tends to be practical in nature and less quantitative than the BS degree awarded by Morgan State University for its information systems program. Indeed, MSU's program has more required

courses and the program overall focuses more on technical material and less on management and applications. Please see the attached comparison chart.

3) Neutral enrollment – no net growth

Loyola’s proposal does not project growth. Thus, the proposed program could not impact the maintenance of a high-demand program at MSU or any other school. The current number of enrolled students in the existing BBA program is expected to redistribute among the discrete majors. Loyola students are not permitted to declare a major until their second semester, so the projection table in the proposal shows the three years of building up to full implementation of the major and stable enrollment in subsequent years.

To be clear, the projected enrollment for the proposed information systems and data analytics major replicates the established enrollments in Loyola’s existing information systems concentration, which the major would replace if recommended for implementation. On average, 21 students per class year graduate with a concentration in information systems, so it follows that three class years of majors will equate to 63 enrolled information systems and data analytics majors once the program has been fully implemented. The concentration has been offered continuously at Loyola since 1990. We project no new net enrollments, and this is made clear in the revenue projections table of the proposal, in which we estimate no new revenue.

Loyola’s proposed program remains central to its mission to inspire students to learn, lead, and serve in a diverse and changing world. The critical and compelling need is established by the long-running enrollments in the existing area of concentration. Loyola’s current information systems concentration of the BBA degree program has produced 104 graduates in the last five years. This demonstrates existing demand and the potential success for the proposed major. Even with a projected average of 21 degree completers per year, Loyola’s proposed program will not be able to close the gap between the 3,010 projected annual job openings in Maryland and the 871 bachelor’s degree completers in all the information systems programs in MHEC’s Program Inventory. The Loyola program enrollment numbers could not possibly impede MSU’s growth.

Graduated Concentration Trends from 2015-2019

Concentration	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Total	Average
Information Systems	12	13	22	19	38	104	21

(Source: Loyola University Maryland Office of Institutional Research)

Enrollment Projections – Proposed BBA in Information Systems & Data Analytics

	Enrollment Projections*				
	Year 1 majors	Year 2 majors	Year 3 majors	Year 4 majors	Year 5 majors
Proposed major	Class Year 2024	Class Years 2024 + 2025	Class Years 2024 + 2025 + 2026	Fully implemented	Fully implemented
Information Systems & Data Analytics BBA	21	42	63	63	63

*Enrollment projections for the major are based on the average graduation numbers of the existing concentration.

As stated earlier, the study of information systems has existed at Loyola for decades. However, the proposal to create a discrete major for the program results from university-wide discussions about student success, continuous improvement, and curricular renewal. Loyola's faculty asked large programs to engage in a reduction of course requirements in concert with minor reductions to the core curriculum so that students could benefit from greater flexibility in the degree programs and have more autonomy in exploring academic areas of interest. Students desired the academic flexibility, faculty sought to provide them that flexibility, and the campus engaged in deep, serial conversations at the university, school, department, and program levels.

Deliberation about the curricular renewal and design of the proposed major was robust. The information systems, law and operations (ISLO) department and faculty discussed the curricular changes and the proposal from March-October 2019. Program stakeholders and constituents, including the board of sponsors, the ISLO board of advisors, students, and alumni, provided input along the way through a transparent and collaborative process. The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee endorsed the program proposal, and the Academic Senate and the Board of Trustees each approved the program proposal. The table below depicts the many conversations held about business foundational courses and the advanced courses of the discipline.

Input Processes – Sellinger Business Programs

Body/Action		Foundational Courses	Advanced Courses
		Date	Date
Sellinger Leadership Team timeline discussion		12/5/18	12/5/18
Departmental Work			March-October 2019
Curriculum Committee		8/12/19, 8/23/19, 9/11/19, 10/14/19	9/11/19 and 10/24/19
Sellinger School Faculty	Retreat	5/2/19	
	Retreat	8/29/19	8/29/19
	Assembly Meeting	9/9/19	9/9/19
	Open Forum		10/2/19
	Open Forum		10/11/19
	Assembly Meeting	10/21/19	10/21/19
Sellinger Board of Sponsors Review		5/2/19; 9/26/19	5/2/19; 9/26/19
ISLO Board of Advisors Review			10/3/18; 2/27/19; 5/1/19; 10/17/19
Graduate Alumni Board Review		9/13/19	
Student Advisory Board		9/30/19	
Academic Senate		11/19/19 and 12/10/19	11/19/19 and 12/10/19
Board of Trustees		2/12/2020	2/12/2020

4) Major versus concentration

Morgan State University acknowledges the existence and success of the information systems concentration at Loyola, but it questions why we need a major. While we do not expect to grow our enrollments, we must maintain program vitality and sustainability to continue to attract students to Loyola. Employers recognize the value of the major over the concentration credential. Advising becomes clearer and more understandable for students in the major. As we stated in our proposal, an information systems major is typical of AACSB-accredited schools in the United States. AACSB collects information about business school characteristics across the globe. A review of the most recent five years' data shows that 56% of AACSB Accredited US Schools with undergraduate programs (n = 509) offer undergraduate degree programs in information systems, the sixth most offered undergraduate business program. If the MHEC review process allows another institution to prevent a university from renewing and refreshing its existing programs, then the process hampers progress and innovation and stands in the way of improving academic offerings and responding to market trends, to students, and to the disciplines themselves.

Conclusion

Loyola University Maryland is committed to academic excellence and the education of the whole person through a Jesuit, Catholic liberal arts-based education. The faculty, physical facilities, infrastructure, instructional equipment, library resources, and financial resources already exist in support of the concentration and will remain adequate for the future support of the program. More importantly, we stand in great respect for the work our faculty have done to renew this program, in concert with larger mission-based curricular renewal of Loyola's core curriculum. The program will serve Loyola students well without harm to other Maryland institutions—this is established by the fact that the programs have co-existed for decades.

Loyola University Maryland's Evergreen campus is geographically proximate to Morgan State University's campus, so I reached out to Dr. David Wilson, president of Morgan State University, prior to submitting the proposal. I wished to inform Dr. Wilson of Loyola's plans to submit the proposals, after the proposals were approved by Loyola's Board of Trustees in February 2020. As a result of the call, Loyola hopes to continue conversations with Morgan State University. The amount of time for conversations prior to submission to MHEC was curtailed by the necessary campus responses to the COVID-19 State of Emergency. The proposals have been submitted at this time with the hope to receive the Secretary's recommendation for implementation in time for inclusion in the 2020-21 catalogue.

We invite additional conversation with MSU so that we might find ways to strengthen each institution through mutually beneficial collaboration as the landscape of higher education continues to change and continues to demand innovation from our institutions. We contend, though, that Loyola's student body size, including constraints placed on its size by neighborhood covenants, the face-to-face modality of the program, and the projections for no growth counter Morgan State's claims that the proposed major could do harm to its Bachelor of Science in Information Systems program or to its state funding.

Secretary, if you determine that Morgan State University's objection is justified under §B(5) of regulation 13B.02.03.27, and pursue negotiation, we invite a collaborative approach with both institutions present, via virtual means if necessary, in order to resolve the objection. Otherwise, we ask you, Secretary, for your recommendation to implement the Loyola University Maryland BBA in Information Systems and Data

Analytics. We truly wish to serve Loyola's students well by maintaining robust academic programs that are relevant to the changing higher education landscape. We propose this change to our offerings as part of a much larger institutional review of our undergraduate curriculum, the vitality of our academic programs, and our fiscal sustainability as an institution. Based on evidence, we do not believe the program will cause harm to the Morgan State University information systems program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Brian F. Linnane, S.J." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rev. Brian F. Linnane, S.J.
President

encl.

cc: Dr. Amanda M. Thomas, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, LUM
Dr. Kathleen A. Getz, Dean, Sellinger School of Business and Management, LUM
Dr. Jennifer Frank, Executive Vice President, MICUA
Dr. Emily A.A. Dow, Assistant Secretary for Academic Affairs, MHEC

Comparison of
MSU's Information Systems B.S. and Loyola's Information Systems and Data Analytics BBA

Required courses shown in blue font.

Loyola University Maryland	Morgan State University	Comments
IS 352 – Introduction to Programming in Python	INSS 250 Concepts in Computational Thinking	Similar courses
	INSS 260 Object Oriented Programming for Business Applications	MSU requirement without Loyola counterpart
	INSS 360 Management Information Systems	MSU requirement without Loyola counterpart
IS 353 - Data Management and Database Systems	INSS 380 Data and Information Management	Similar courses
IS 355 - Cyber Security and Networks	INSS 391 IT Infrastructure and Security	Similar courses
IS 358 - Business Intelligence and Data Mining	INSS 395 Data Analytics for Enterprises	Similar courses, but MSU's is not required and is not listed as an elective for the program.
IS 453 - Information Systems Analysis and Design	INSS 370 Systems Analysis and Design	Similar courses
	INSS 396 Cloud Computing: Concepts and Applications	MSU requirement without Loyola counterpart
IS 458 - Web-Enabled Entrepreneurial Project (Capstone)		MSU asserts that these courses are the same, but they are not. MSU's course is project management. Loyola's focuses on matching technologies to business problems and then completing an entrepreneurship project.
	INSS 490: Information Systems Project Development and Management	
One elective from computer science, mathematics, business, communication, engineering	Two electives, all INSS courses.	Loyola's elective options increase the interdisciplinarity of the program.
	One elective from the business school	

Summary:

- Loyola's BBA requires 6 courses plus 1 elective.
- MSU's BS, requires 8 courses plus 3 electives.
- Four of the required courses are similar.

Assessment: MSU's program has more requirements and the program overall focuses more on technical material and less on management and applications. This is what would be expected when comparing a BS and a BBA degree program.