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July 15, 2020

Emily A.A. Dow, Ph.D.

Assistant Secretary of Academic Affairs

Maryland Higher Education Commission

6 North Liberty Street

Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Dr. Dow:

Salisbury University (SU) respectfully objects to the proposal (#20263) by Loyola University Maryland (“Loyola”) to offer a Bachelor of Business Administration (B.B.A.) in International Business (IB). As noted under Education Article § 11-206 of the Annotated Code of Maryland and the Code of Maryland Regulations 13B.02.03.25, area #3, we believe this action will cause “unreasonable program duplication which would cause demonstrable harm to another institution.”

To support their proposal, Loyola provides some information regarding the job market (pages 5, 6 and 7 of their proposal). These numbers (for "business" graduates) do not support the need for a specific major in IB. Based on SU’s experience with internship placement in IB, we find that employers do not hire students because they are simply an “IB major.” They hire a student with a specific profile and a specific set of skills, such as proficiency in a foreign language, ability to live overseas for an extended period of time, information/technology skills, marketing and other complementary skills. In light of this, SU’s program has several specific requirements: proficiency in a foreign language (assessed by an independent testing center), a full semester abroad, and an internship abroad (or in the USA but with international content); furthermore, SU encourages students to complete a minor in marketing or finance. The rationale for these stringent requirements is to make our students more “marketable”. In contrast, the program proposed by Loyola requires students to choose a single item from a list of similar options. Because our requirements for IB program are so stringent, enrollments are not typically very high (Page 7 of their proposal). Indeed, the proposal offered by Loyola shows that neither SU nor University of Maryland College Park (the already existing programs in the state of Maryland) enrollments are either very big or growing (see page 7). And yet, Loyola’s objective is to triple its enrollment from 36 (IB concentration) to 108 (IB major) within 3 years, which seems unlikely given that the University of Maryland College Park, a much larger institution, had a total enrollment of only 33 in 2019. Given the limited enrollment and enrollment growth in the existing Maryland programs, it is hard to see how a new program satisfies untapped demand. In addition, McDaniel College has recently launched a bachelor’s degree in IB, which further dilutes the enrollment pool. SU submits that it is more likely that a new program, one with less stringent requirements, will simply draw the existing small pool of enrollment away from our excellent IB program, which will cause demonstrable harm to our program as stipulated in 13B.02.03.25.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

 

Karen L. Olmstead, Ph.D.

Provost and Senior Vice President

of Academic Affairs

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cc: Dr. Charles A. Wight, President, Salisbury University

Dr. Christy Weer, Dean, Perdue School of Business, Salisbury University

Dr. Antoinette Coleman, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, USM