

**PROGRAM REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
PROGRESS REPORT
on IP approved 10-28-2019
Retailing and Tourism Management
2019 - 2020**

The departmental curriculum committee assessed the content of this report and provided input on how the requirements should be achieved (Vanessa Jackson, RayeCarol Cavender, Jason Swanson, and Scarlett Wesley).

Recommendation 1. Develop a strategy to build and communicate department and program brand identity. The combination of two former departments into one department with two different degree programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, and all three programs being described by three initials, leads to a confusing brand identity. The department might evaluate simplified program names, or develop ways to better brand the existing names in promotional materials. The department should be proactive in identifying and establishing a brand identity that expresses the distinctive characteristics of each major, while identifying the core that holds them together. That future brand identity should be incorporated into a communication strategy that communicates it to stakeholders.

Assessment method: A survey of faculty was conducted to determine their thoughts on how to improve our brand and market the department. A qualitative review of benchmark institutions was also conducted to determine similarities and differences in course offerings. This information was used to develop the branding of the department.

Results: The department decided it was best to keep the Retailing and Tourism Management department name because it does indicate a combination of both programs. The results of the comparison of benchmark institutions suggested a need for new classes that would enhance both programs. The study indicated that the department is on target for most classes. Some course content is taught as part of other courses in our programs. HMT courses are similar to the benchmark institutions. The results also indicated a need for a collaborative course(s) between the programs within the department. A course entitled, “Soft Skills in RTM,” was created based on faculty research, and is designed to appeal to students from both the MAT and HMT program.

Analysis of results and reflection: The RTM Department has begun to offer more “Special Topics” classes to increase course offerings and draw attention to the uniqueness of our programs. According to the comparison data with benchmark institutions, the department needs to create an honors course and a class related to sustainability and social responsibility.

Ongoing improvement actions: The department will continue to seek new avenues of recruitment for the purpose of drawing new students to our programs. The department will also continue to enhance the current program by using “Special Topics” as a method of offering new class that are up-to date and collaborative between programs. An honors course will be added, as well as a class related to sustainability and social responsibility. The department will also continue to review the course offerings to meet the needs of students and ensure that they are competitive in the global job market.

Recommendation 2. Evaluate capacity and opportunities for undergraduate enrollment growth. With increased outreach and communication about the department's two undergraduate programs, enrollment growth is possible. The department should evaluate the instructional capacity of the faculty and the allocation of facilities as it contemplates potential enrollment growth. In addition, developing a more robust graduate program may affect the capacity of the faculty to teach additional undergraduate students.

Assessment method: Communication tools were reviewed (brochures, newsletter, and cards) Assessment of the facilities and use of facilities available to RTM was conducted. Faculty capacity for teaching has been reviewed.

Results: Communication and marketing strategies implemented include a department newsletter, a brochure, and cards that reflect a more diverse department. Also, the third floor of Erikson was revitalized with new display fixtures and promotional posters. New recruitment materials have been developed to express a more diverse population in the department. The materials also provide a picture of changes in program offerings.

Analysis of results and reflection: New classes are being taught under "Special Topics" that are reflective of current topics in the industry and are needed by students to be competitive as entry-level workers. Courses that have been taught with separate sections (i.e., one in HMT, one in MAT) have been combined so that the classes can be promoted as one core course. The textile lab, which is located in two large rooms, has been condensed to one room. The room will be established as a space for enhanced in-class lab work.

Ongoing improvement actions: The faculty will continue to seek help with recruiting strategies to promote the undergraduate programs. The department will continue to seek funds to renovate, specifically focusing on the textile lab for courses with lab work (i.e., MAT 237, MAT 120). Faculty will continually discuss what classes can be taught as "Special Topics." This will ensure that students have a wider variety of courses that reflect topics that have been recommended by industry professionals and identified through the review of other institutions' offerings. Assessment of current capacity across faculty and facilities for teaching and research has not yet been completed.

Recommendation 3. Develop mechanisms to work collaboratively in Cooperative Extension programming. Hospitality and Tourism has a logical connection to the work of CEDIK. RTM faculty members with appropriate research interests could potentially work collaboratively on service or research projects with CEDIK faculty and staff as a preliminary move toward the possible later development of an extension appointment in RTM.

Assessment method: The faculty decided to determine how an Extension Associate in the area of RTM could provide the community with a connection to increase emphasis on hospitality and tourism in local Kentucky communities. A survey was developed and administered to all Extension Associates.

Results: An HMT faculty member has agreed to function as a representative for the RTM department to establish a working relationship with CEDIK. Data from the survey indicated that this partnership will be useful to support student learning in the following content areas: Tourism, Policy and Planning, Agritourism, Small Retailing Business, Destination Marketing, Small Hospitality Business, Customer Service, Special Event Planning, Food and Beverage Management, and Apparel and Textiles. The results of the survey indicated that we do need an associate in our department. An agreement between Extension and RTM was underway to split the cost of an associate for RTM. However, the pandemic created severe budget cuts, making it impossible to hire an associate at this time.

Analysis of results and reflection: The need of an Extension Associate is high. The possibility of hiring an Extension associate is not possible because of budget cuts due to Covid-19.

Ongoing improvement actions: Faculty has a record of collaborative projects with Extension Associates. Faculty will continue to work on projects in extension as they have in the past. If the future provides revenue for the hiring of an extension associate, the department will reopen negotiations.

Recommendation 4. Examine the undergraduate curricula and make appropriate enhancements. Curricular areas that may need review include industry specific topics and methods, the level of rigor of upper level undergraduate courses, and improvement of scheduling flexibility for students. Evaluating the curricula in view of potential accreditation may be a consideration for the department.

Assessment method: The curriculum committee (Scarlett Wesley, Jason Swanson, RayeCarol Cavender, Vanessa Jackson) designed and implemented a qualitative and quantitative assessment to determine commonalities between benchmark institutions.

Results: An analysis of comparable programs has been conducted to determine what courses are similar and/or different from course offerings in the HMT and MAT programs. The results of the comparison of benchmark institutions suggested a need for new classes that would enhance both programs. The study indicated that the department is on target for most of our classes. Some courses' content is taught as part of other courses in our programs. HMT courses are similar to the benchmark institutions. The results also indicated a need for a collaborative course(s) between the programs within the department. A course entitled, "Soft Skills in RTM," was created based on faculty research. The course is designed to appeal to students from both the MAT and HMT program. Another course developed by Mika Pryor entitle, "Apparel and Textiles" was also successful. Both classes were full.

Analysis of results and reflection: The success of the two classes is an indication of the need for new courses that combine both programs.

Ongoing improvement actions: Faculty will continually discuss what classes can be taught as a "Special Topic." This will ensure that students have a wider variety of courses that reflect topics that have been recommended by industry professionals and identified through the review of other

institutions' offerings. Assessment of current capacity across faculty and facilities for teaching and research has not yet been completed.

Recommendation 5. Enhance Erikson facilities. Facilities improvement has a spatial/social aspect to provide adequate teaching and learning space and foster community for both undergraduate and graduate students. Facilities improvements also have an aesthetic/communications aspect to convey more vividly the fashion and tourism aspects of the department and its students' future careers.

Assessment method: Faculty were asked to make suggestions on how to improve and use the space allocated to RTM. Assessment included examination of space and usage.

Results: Based on suggestions and availability of online class funds, new bulletin boards have replaced the old ones and have enhanced the appearance of the floor. A new television replaced the smaller one to rotate important information and promote the programs. The program is visible on the first floor using posters. New promotional materials have been professionally created.

Analysis of results and reflection: The third floor of Erikson has a fresh, uplifting appearance. Faculty and students appreciate the change.

Ongoing improvement actions: Now that the promotional materials are complete and printed, the department has filled the boards with important information related to study abroad programs, faculty research, the advisory board, job announcements, and student internship experiences. PPD replaced heating and cooling units in three classrooms (i.e., 300,302, 306) in spring 2020.

Recommendation 6. Enhance faculty development and productivity. Faculty development could be enhanced with a program of collaborative faculty mentoring, clarifying research productivity expectations in the department, developing collaboration opportunities with faculty members in other departments, and increasing visibility of faculty research internally and externally. Encourage faculty to include information in their research statements that allows reviewers to understand research quantity and quality, such as length of time from submission to publication in journals in which the author publishes, the impact factor of the best journal in the field, average number of publications per year of people in the field, or other measures.

Assessment method: A meeting was held early January 2020 to discuss with faculty how and what needs to be added to their CV's and research statements. Faculty began to examine what methods were best to use to assess the quality and quantity of publications such as length of time from submission to publication in journals in which the author publishes, the impact factor of the best journal in the field, the average number of publications per year of people in the field, or other measures. The discussion also included faculty development, productivity, and mentoring.

Results: Faculty have begun to adjust their CV's to include information related to quantity and quality of their work.

Analysis of results and reflection: Each faculty member added information, based on what was available, to support the quality and quantity of their research. Some examples include impact factors, Google citations, and Researchgate readership. Faculty continue to participate in professional development activities related to teaching, research, and outreach. Faculty are working toward increasing collaborations with others in the college.

Ongoing improvement actions: Faculty continue to publish and conduct research as much as possible during these very trying times of the pandemic.

Recommendation 7. Formalize process for development of alumni relations and philanthropic efforts. The department's active Advisory Board, alumni, and industry connections support student enrichment activities and provide a valuable external network for faculty. The department could work more closely with CAFE philanthropy to translate the loyalty of these supporters and additional alumni into greater financial support for department initiatives.

Assessment method: Establish a representative on the CAFE Alumni Board of Directors, and establish connections between alumni, the department, advisory board, and industry.

Results: The department has worked with philanthropy to send our newsletter to alumni and friends to make them aware of what we are doing in the department. The advisory board has provided some help with promoting the department.

Analysis of results and reflection: Plans for the spring of 2020 were hindered by the pandemic. The fashion show, which usually draws alumni and friends had to be canceled. It usually raises anywhere from 12,000.00 to 18,000.00 dollars. We have had some funds donated to the department through philanthropy.

Ongoing improvement actions: The department will continue to seek funds where possible during these trying times.

Recommendation 8. Continue to enhance the graduate program. Increasing onsite graduate enrollment would allow the development of more robust cohorts for graduate level courses. Other recommended enhancements include increasing graduate student research opportunities, increasing rigor of coursework, and developing diverse opportunities for professional experiences. Greater interaction between online and onsite students could help overcome some of the limitations of the small onsite cohort size.

Assessment method: The department decided not to require the GRE because most of our students are non-traditional students who have been away from an academic setting for many years. A review of the enrollment for onsite and online graduate students after the change in requirements was conducted.

Results: Graduate student enrollment in the onsite and online graduate programs has increased from previous years. The face-to-face program has nine students, and the online program has 15 students.

Analysis of results and reflection: There are more graduate students in the online program than in the onsite program.

Ongoing improvement actions: We will continue to seek ways to improve the enrollment in both programs (i.e., onsite, online).