



Cornell University
Office of the Provost

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MEMORANDUM

March 3, 2022

To: Educational Policies Committee
Committee on Academic Programs and Policies

From: Michael I. Kotlikoff, Provost

Subject: Part-time Bachelor Degree for Non-traditional Students

Thank you very much for your careful review and discussion of the committee's report on providing a Part-time Bachelor's Degree for Non-traditional Students. Having consulted with your committees early in the planning process for this proposed degree program, I am heartened by your positive response to, and support for, its "motivating sentiment." As your committees noted, the extension of the opportunity to earn a Cornell undergraduate degree to groups of students for whom such a degree would not otherwise be possible, and in so doing to extend the impact of the university, aligns with "the university's founding as a land grant institution intent on educating *any person in any study*" and provides a compelling rationale for this effort.

However, I also note the EPC and CAPP members' concerns regarding how such a program would be implemented. Issues of faculty alignment, faculty burden, quality of education, academic standards for students, student composition, financial aid, the makeup of enrolled students, and how the program is differentiated from our residential degrees were similarly identified by committee members, but out of the scope of their charge to solve. We agree that these issues must be carefully considered as we move the effort forward and intend to begin addressing these concerns through a careful planning process that will be undertaken with the leadership of the School of Continuing Education and Summer Sessions. To enable that effort, I will begin a search for the next dean of the school, whose primary responsibility will be the establishment of a part-time bachelor's degree program within the school, consistent with the cautions articulated by your committees. The search process will be guided by the need to identify an academic leader with appropriate expertise and experience to successfully establish this program. Your respective reports will be critical in guiding some of the key questions that must be answered, and I anticipate continued consultation following the recruitment of the new dean.

I should add that I am optimistic that we will be successful in creating a distinctive and high-quality degree program given the foundation of the School of Continuing Education and Summer Sessions and the expertise and success of eCornell, as well as the commitment of our faculty to this effort, which aligns so well with Cornell's legacy.

Thank you again for your advice and counsel. I look forward to your partnership as we proceed to the next phase.

cc: Eve DeRosa
Neema Kudva