

23 February 2017

To Associate Dean Uriel Quesada and members of the College of Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee:

Thank you very much for your careful consideration of our program proposal and for your suggestions for that proposal's revision. Enclosed, you will find an updated proposal reflecting our responses to those suggestions. This coversheet offers a point-by-point summary of the committee's concerns, and how we have attempted to address those concerns in this revision of the program proposal:

CONCERN 1: Financial sustainability of the program: "In an environment where programs and departments are experiencing severe budget costs, how is the program going to secure funding for the first years of operation?"

President Wildes has committed to supporting the program for three years, after which we expect that it will be generating sufficient enrollments to justify continuation. President Wildes has agreed to fund annually for three years

- A full-time Program Director salary
- A Visiting Assistant Professor salary
- Two adjunct salaries for courses as needed
- Operating budget including funds for experiential learning

See attached memo of commitment, appendix C.

CONCERN 2: Academic sustainability of the program: "One extraordinary full-time person is scheduled to teach up to two of the program's core courses. Is that person going to be at Loyola in the long run? The other two core courses don't have a full-time instructor assigned. There is only one faculty member at Loyola with specialization in the field of Food Studies."

Because the program is in its initial stages, we requested and received commitment for a Visiting Assistant Professor rather than a tenure-track hire. This was a deliberate decision. We feel that a VAP hired on a three-year contract will allow us to staff our core courses and further develop our more advanced offerings in the major while still allowing us more closely to evaluate the strengths and needs of the major as the program grows in its first three years. This will give us a clearer basis for setting criteria for a tenure track search when the program is more mature. The VAP will be hired via a national search and will be responsible for teaching Foundations in Food Systems and Commerce and Foundations in Food Policy, along with upper level courses in line with their research specialty, and for advising Food Studies majors. After the initial three-year period, we expect to receive approval for a tenure-track hire in a specialty to be decided upon by faculty affiliated with the program.

The three-year commitment we have received for the program director will assure continued teaching coverage for Introduction to Food Studies, Foundations in Food Culture, and Writing About Literature: Thinking Critically About Food.

This commitment ensures that other functions, crucial to the academic success and quality of the program, will also continue to be covered: raising funds for the program, promoting the program locally and nationally, aiding in student recruitment efforts for the program, developing and maintaining relationships with community partners, advising Food Studies majors, coordinating and supervising student internships, and facilitating the program's assessment and development.

CONCERN 3: Definition of concentration areas: "The Concentration areas are very broad. Food Policy, for instance, includes 27 possible courses. They are too open, with not clear emphasis. They lack consistency and coherence. They need better structure, which is critical for advising and assessment. In some cases, courses in the concentration areas have prerequisites that are not part of the concentration."

We have restructured the program DPCL to include a single track, with a significantly narrower selection of courses serving as major electives. Key features of the DPCL revision include the following:

- All major elective options either have no prerequisite, the general prerequisite that a student have attained either sophomore or junior status, or a prerequisite required as part of the Loyola Core (i.e., English T122).
- Writing About Literature: Thinking Critically About Food is now required in the major, and fulfills the WAL Loyola Core requirement for Food Studies majors.
- To give additional shape to the curriculum beyond the core courses, a "Food in Society" elective is now required. Students may take one of two sociology courses, or "A History of Food in America" to fulfill this requirement.
- Study abroad options for fulfilling one of the program's major electives are listed on the back of the DPCL. Students will be encouraged through advising to pursue study abroad opportunities.

This revision of the DPCL ensures that students enrolling in this major will follow a clear and intellectually coherent path through the program. In addition to the major's core foundations courses, students will also pursue more advanced, writing-instructive study of representations of food in literature and on film, and advanced study of the social and historical contexts of food. The narrower selection of major electives offers students clearer options for paths to graduation, focusing on those courses we feel are most likely to appeal to a broad cross-section of students enrolling in the program.

CONCERN 4: Capstone assessment: "The Food Systems Capstone is an assessment tool that is not mentioned in the proposal."

We have included a full description of the capstone experience in the program proposal revision. The Food Studies capstone, modeled on the successful capstone program for the Environmental Studies major, offers students three capstone options: an internship, an independent study, or a research project. All three of

these options will require written proposals and contracts approved by a supervising faculty member and the program chair; in the case of students choosing to pursue an internship, approval and student evaluation from the host organization will also be required. As one of the capstone requirements, students will write a reflection discussing connections between their capstone project and the learning outcomes of the program. These reflections, along with faculty evaluations of the capstone projects, will serve as key assessment mechanisms for the program.

While we don't anticipate significant numbers of students engaging in the capstone activities in the first three years of the program, students interested in internships or research projects during that period will be supervised by the program director, the VAP, Justin Nystrom, Angel Parham, or Craig Hood, all of whom have committed to such supervision, or by other faculty yet to be named.

CONCERN 5: Amount of Loyola Core requirements: "The DPCL includes a 42-credit Loyola Core. It has to be adjusted to 39 hours."

The Loyola Core Writing About Literature Requirement is now fulfilled in the major, through Writing About Literature: Thinking Critically About Food, lowering the total of LC hours outside the major to 39.

We hope that these revisions satisfy your concerns about the Food Studies major. We feel that the program has been strengthened by your feedback, and we look forward to answering any further questions you may have about our proposal. Thank you again for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Daniel Mintz, Justin Nystrom, and Melanie McKay