**Best Practices for Writing New Degree Program Proposals**

**Articulate a clear rationale for why the program is needed.**

This should be unique to the program and might encompass an identified workforce need, an emerging field with high growth potential, or a strong link with the University’s mission or strategic plan.

**Provide an evidence-based rationale for why the program will succeed.**

Avoid “If we build it, they will come,” assumptions. Provide concrete evidence for why the program is likely to be successful. This can include workforce local, state, or national workforce data; letters of support from employers; surveys of prospective students; and an assessment of the competitive landscape.

**Set realistic expectations for the program.**

While challenging, setting enrollment projections is an important part of the process. Build programs around relatively conservative projections that, if met, would still lead to a viable, vibrant academic program.

**Describe anticipated resource needs.**

What resources will be needed to launch and sustain the program, and how will these resources be obtained? Proposals should clearly outline how resources will be obtained. This could be done by outlining plans to discontinue another academic program or reallocate resources, or could entail a commitment from the chair, dean, etc., to provide necessary resources for a prescribed period.

**Detail similar programs and proactive efforts to engage with others.**

Are there other programs offered at your university or within the UM System that are similar, or that might be perceived as similar? Proactively reach out to units with similar programs to discuss your proposal, concerns, and collaborative opportunities, and detail those efforts in the proposal.

**Use the appropriate writing style.**

Write for an external audience that doesn’t have prior knowledge about your subject. Don’t use jargon and if an acronym is needed, define it on first use. Write in a formal voice and avoid first-person pronouns.