



Cover Sheet for In-State Institutions
New Program or Substantial Modification to Existing Program

Institution Submitting Proposal: Goucher College

Each action below requires a separate proposal and cover sheet.

- Radio button options for program types: New Academic Program, Substantial Change to a Degree Program, etc.

Payment Submitted: Yes/No, Payment Type: Check # 315003, Payment Amount: \$850, Date Submitted: 9/15/2022

Department Proposing Program: Communication and Media Studies
Degree Level and Degree Type: Master of Arts
Title of Proposed Program: Digital Communication
Total Number of Credits: 30
Suggested Codes: HEGIS, CIP: 90702.0000
Program Modality: Distance Education (fully online)
Program Resources: Using Existing Resources
Projected Implementation Date: Spring, Year: 2024
Provide Link to Most Recent Academic Catalog: https://catalog.goucher.edu/

Preferred Contact for this Proposal: Name: Elaine Meyer-Lee, Title: Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, Phone: (410) 337-6044, Email: Elaine.Meyer-Lee@goucher.edu

President/Chief Executive: Type Name: Kent Devereaux, Signature: [Handwritten Signature], Date: 9/13/22, Date of Approval/Endorsement by Governing Board:



September 13, 2022

Dr. James D. Fielder, Jr., Ph.D.  
Maryland Higher Education Commission  
6 N. Liberty Street, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Secretary Fielder:

Goucher College is submitting a proposal seeking approval for the development of a new *Master of Arts in Digital Communication* program, a request that has been endorsed by Goucher faculty. The proposed program builds on the strengths of our undergraduate major in Communication and Media Studies, and it closely aligns with our commitment to provide an innovative liberal arts education that incorporates interdisciplinary approaches to important areas, including the digital space.

A check for the review of this proposal is being sent via snail mail to the Commission, but please contact me at [Elaine.Meyer-Lee@goucher.edu](mailto:Elaine.Meyer-Lee@goucher.edu) or at 410-337-6044 if you need additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elaine Meyer-Lee".

Elaine Meyer-Lee, Ed.D.  
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Goucher College

# Goucher College Proposal for a New Academic Degree

## Master of Arts in Digital Communication

### A. Centrality to Institutional Mission and Planning Priorities:

- 1) **Provide a description of the program, including each area of concentration (if applicable), and how it relates to the institution's approved mission.**

Goucher College is pleased to submit a proposal to offer a Master of Arts in Digital Communication (DCOM).

This proposed graduate degree program will expand upon existing undergraduate degree programs already offered at Goucher. The proposed Master of Arts in Digital Communication will continue Goucher's commitments to solving complex problems and "incorporating interdisciplinary approaches to important areas that cross or transcend the boundaries of traditional disciplines," including the digital space. This proposed program aligns with Goucher's commitment to provide "an innovative liberal arts education."

The M.A. in Digital Communication will build upon elements from the Communication and Media Studies undergraduate program<sup>1</sup> including its newly proposed Digital Arts major. While the undergraduate coursework focuses mainly on academic scholarship and theory, the M.A. in Digital Communication will combine a more advanced academic foundation with a primary emphasis on the practical skills our students need to apply in their careers. This leverages Goucher's strengths as a small liberal arts college with its dedication to improving student success and its ability to provide greater preparation for the leaders of tomorrow. Digital communication is a rapidly expanding field; in the last year alone, over 90,000 unique job postings across various occupations in the field were posted within 150 miles of Goucher's campus. Communicating via digital media is a key component for careers in marketing, fundraising, and public relations, all of which are experiencing a higher growth rate than the national average<sup>2</sup>.

Graduate students in the M.A. in Digital Communication program will take ten courses: four core courses, five courses in their track, and one capstone course. The core courses focus on the economic and cultural impact of digital communication, innovations across the digital industry, and the ethics of communicating in the digital space. As a college steeped in the liberal arts tradition, this approach remains consistent with Goucher's ideals to "help each student master significant areas of knowledge and skills while developing... a system of personal and professional ethics." The two tracks are: Digital Arts Production and Digital Strategy and Promotion. The Digital Arts Production track will draw upon the strengths of the production faculty within the Communication and Media Studies department<sup>1</sup> who oversee current undergraduate offerings and those from the newly proposed Digital Arts major while training future professionals specifically in audio, video, and graphic design production for websites and other digital platforms. The Digital Strategy and Promotion track teaches students how to publicize and market

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<sup>1</sup> The name of the Department will likely change to Media Arts and Studies in the next calendar year.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/media-and-communication/public-relations-specialists.htm>

organizations in the digital space with a strategy based on public relations principles, data analytics, and audience research. Based on student demand, these tracks could become concentrations in the future.

The M.A. in Digital Communication program will be taught using a hybrid format combining both online and in-person classes. This combination meets the needs of a majority of students (68%) who would be likely students for this type of program, according to a recent Digital Learning Pulse Survey by Cengage.<sup>3</sup> Incorporating both online and in-person classes can also go a long way toward creating a sense of community among the M.A. in Digital Communication students. This fulfills another key component of Goucher's mission, which is to foster "a community where discourse is valued and practiced, where students attend small classes and interact closely with faculty and one another..."

**2) Explain how the proposed program supports the institution's strategic goals and provide evidence that affirms it is an institutional priority.**

The proposed M.A. in Digital Communication program will prepare students for innovative careers by developing a breadth of understanding about the digital space alongside more specialized training in tracks that focus on cultivating a skillset based on complex analysis and creative application. This is exactly in line with Goucher's principles to provide "an innovative liberal arts education" that prepares students "for a life of inquiry, creativity, and critical and analytical thinking."

One of the pillars of Goucher College's *Strategic Plan 2021-2025: Cultivating Global Changemakers* involves "develop[ing] innovative, future-oriented educational programs that respond to the needs of today's students." The M.A. in Digital Communication, which was singled out in that plan as a priority for the college, will prepare students for careers in a growing industry while also helping them plan for a future shaped by digital culture and a multimedia landscape. Another pillar from the strategic plan prioritizes new academic programs "in high-demand and emerging fields," such as Digital Communication. In 25% of the regional social media jobs currently posted, employers seek applicants with a master's degree<sup>4</sup>. This number will likely grow as the field itself matures. Goucher's proposed program will allow the college to be on the forefront of this burgeoning field while fulfilling its institutional priority to educate students for a post-pandemic future that increasingly relies on technology.

**3) Provide a brief narrative of how the proposed program will be adequately funded for at least the first five years of program implementation. (Additional related information is required in section L.)**

The proposed Digital Communication program will rely primarily on resources and some faculty from the undergraduate Communication and Media Studies department. However, this proposed program requires a full-time graduate director to lead and expand this program along with adjunct faculty with relevant industry experience. In our *Strategic Plan 2021-2025: Cultivating Global Changemakers*, Goucher has made a commitment to

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<sup>3</sup> <https://campustechnology.com/articles/2021/05/13/73-percent-of-students-prefer-some-courses-be-fully-online-post-pandemic.aspx>

<sup>4</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics

allocate adequate resources to support this program. A full-time director will be hired to oversee it, recruit students and faculty, and manage and develop the program.

- 4) Provide a description of the institution's commitment to:**
  - a. ongoing administrative, financial, and technical support of the proposed program**
  - b. continuation of the program for a period of time sufficient to allow enrolled students to complete the program.**

The program will be primarily composed of faculty and facility resources that already exist at the College. As previously mentioned, funding to support this program is prioritized in Goucher's Strategic Plan.

Goucher is strongly committed to continuing the proposed program for a period of time sufficient to allow enrolled students to complete the program. Careers in public relations, marketing, and fundraising are expected to experience above-average growth over the next decade. Thus, there will be an increased need and demand for qualified, highly skilled professionals in these areas, and a master's degree in Digital Communication from Goucher College as a respected liberal arts institution would elevate any applicant's position. Goucher believes the proposed program will attract numerous students seeking additional training in this field and preparation for a changing future more reliant on digital technology.

**B. Critical and Compelling Regional or Statewide Need as Identified in the State Plan:**

- 1) Demonstrate demand and need for the program in terms of meeting present and future needs of the region and the State in general based on one or more of the following:**
  - a. The need for the advancement and evolution of knowledge;**
  - b. Societal needs, including expanding educational opportunities and choices for minority and educationally disadvantaged students at institutions of higher education;**
  - c. The need to strengthen and expand the capacity of historically black institutions to provide high quality and unique educational programs.**

Digital communication is an ever-expanding facet of society and our evolving future. Our culture, politics, economics, and everyday life are shaped by our interactions with and use of digital media. This is especially true for the fields of public relations, marketing, and fundraising, which are on the forefront of this technologically driven future. Informational technology and data analytics, key components of this proposed program, were singled out in the Maryland State Plan for Post-Secondary Education as innovative industries and academic studies for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As these areas are only beginning to be explored and understood, Goucher's program will probe students into furthering knowledge about the intricacies of digital communication and identifying how it will continue to develop and influence business and society as a whole.

Goucher College is dedicated to diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice as fundamental components of our mission and ethos. The Goucher College Center for Race, Equity, and Identity (CREI) provides advocacy, resources, and programs to support students from historically under-represented populations and is committed to building a community around their lived experiences. Our goal is to create an environment where students can support one another, benefit from their collective

wisdom and gain energy for action through conversations about topics relevant to race, oppression, privilege, and social justice.

**2) Provide evidence that the perceived need is consistent with the [Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education](#).**

The proposed M.A. in Digital Communication program will serve many of the priorities identified in the Maryland State Plan for Postsecondary Education.

*Strategy 4: Continue to ensure equal educational opportunities for all Marylanders by supporting all postsecondary institutions.*

At Goucher, we champion an inclusive community, embrace and respect different perspectives, and value diversity in all its forms and intersections, including ability, age, culture, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, nationality, race, religious and spiritual belief, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.

*Strategy 5: Ensure that statutes, regulations, policies, and practices that support students and encourage their success are designed to serve the respective needs of both traditional and non-traditional students.*

The Office of Student Support and Outreach at Goucher College provides all undergraduate and graduate students with education, tools, and support around issues of student success in all areas of the college experience. Its primary focus is to support students who encounter any kind of barrier or obstacle by working directly with students to connect them with resources, provide accountability and training, and help them best navigate any problems in their college career. The Office of Student Financial Aid works with students to explain the financial aid process and direct them towards relevant scholarships and fellowships that exist at the graduate level.

The hybrid online and in-person format of this proposed program will serve non-traditional students well. The program's structure is designed to address the needs of recent college graduates and working professionals. Students may also choose to attend part-time or full-time depending on their unique economic situation and time constraints. Such flexibility is built into the program so that non-traditional students have the same access and path to success as those on a more traditional path.

*Strategy 6: Improve the student experience by providing better options and services that are designed to facilitate prompt completion of degree requirements.*

Goucher College is committed to supporting students and helping them achieve their personal goals by providing resources, tools, and direct assistance. In addition to academic advisers, another such resource is the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE). ACE is an academic support center that draws upon the strengths of the liberal arts education's holistic nature and guides students in preparing for a life of inquiry, creativity, social responsibility, and personal and professional ethics and integrity. ACE helps students learn effective study skills, critical and analytical thinking skills, and how to establish effective time management plans and organizational systems.

The flexible scheduling from the hybrid format increases the ease of access and facilitates prompt degree completion. Ten courses will be required for completion of the

M.A. in Digital Communication. This can be completed in 12-to-15-months for full-time students.

*Strategy 7: Enhance career advising and planning services and integrate them explicitly into academic advising and planning.*

Each graduate student is assigned a graduate advisor, and the college strongly recommends the student meet with their advisor each term to discuss course registration and degree completion progress. Students in the M.A. in Digital Communication program will also be encouraged to seek professional internships for which they can receive course credit. The capstone project required for graduation will involve either the creation of digital media content produced using audio, visual, and/or emerging media technology or development of a comprehensive digital communication campaign based on strategy and research that incorporates social media, web content, and mobile/app delivery. Both projects will prepare students for future careers in digital communication post-graduation.

Goucher's Career Education Office connects students to Career Communities, which are groups of students, alumnae/i, employers, and staff with shared interests in industries such as Media, Arts, and Communications. Each community shares career information, industry-specific resources, special events, and networking opportunities to help students achieve their post-graduation career goals.

*Strategy 8: Develop new partnerships between colleges and businesses to support workforce development and improve workforce readiness.*

As part of the proposed program's curricula, one unique course we will offer is titled "Meta Certified Digital Marketing and Media Planning." This course was developed leveraging key Meta (formerly known as Facebook) learning tools and resources. Using academic source materials in conjunction with Meta-provided resources, students will learn to strategically use Meta's platforms to achieve organizational goals and objectives. Upon completion of the course, students have the option to take one or two Meta Certified Professional Exam(s). This elite certification will make M.A. in Digital Communication graduates more competitive for jobs and will give them a critical advantage over their peers as most jobs in digital communication require employees' familiarity and knowledge of Meta's marketing platforms and interfaces. This business-driven credential is an opportunity that is wholly unique to those offered in similar graduate programs in the region. Completion of a Meta Certified Professional Exam gives students access to the internal Meta Certification Career Network listing opportunities from over 200 companies and virtual networking events exclusively available to Meta Certified Professionals.

*Strategy 9: Strengthen and sustain development and collaboration in addressing teaching and learning challenges.*

Continued pedagogical training is a priority for Goucher College's liberal arts education mission, and thus the college significantly invests in such opportunities. For all undergraduate and graduate faculty, Goucher College encourages pedagogical development by offering workshops, trainings, and symposiums focused on improving teaching strategies and learning outcomes. Goucher's Center for the Advancement of Scholarship and Teaching (C.A.S.T.) emphasizes problem-based learning in its pedagogical approach. This innovative method is student-centered and focuses on using

real-world problems in the classroom to motivate learning and develop critical-thinking skills. For distance learning in particular, Goucher faculty have access to vast resources including tutorials on best practices, teaching effectively in the online environment, and converting face-to-face conversations to online, among other topics. Instructional designers are available to assist online faculty in course management and recommendations for successful online teaching. The adjunct instructors who will teach courses in the proposed M.A. in Digital Communication program will bring their own professional experience and expertise into the classroom, but must also receive training on distance education.

*Strategy 10: Expand support for research and research partnerships.*

As a leading liberal arts college, Goucher is dedicated to faculty research and scholarship. The faculty within the proposed program will continue their own sophisticated research endeavors and advance our understanding of complex issues related to digital communication, emerging media platforms, and new technologies. As many of the faculty within the proposed master's program will also teach undergraduate students, this collaboration and sharing of resources will give students greater access to innovative ideas and cutting-edge research.

*Strategy 11: Encourage a culture of risk-taking and experimentation.*

As pervasive as digital communication is within society, we are only beginning to understand its impact and determine best practices. With this proposed program, Goucher College will be on the forefront of a burgeoning academic and professional field encouraging our students to tackle risks and experiment with new ideas, strategies, and methods as they navigate a plethora of digital spaces. This proposed program will train students for innovative careers while teaching them business ethics, collaborative practices, and critical thinking.

### **C. Quantifiable and Reliable Evidence and Documentation of Market Supply and Demand in the Region and State:**

#### **1) Describe potential industry or industries, employment opportunities, and expected level of entry (ex. *mid-level management*) for graduates of the proposed program:**

The Digital Communication field is vast with careers as diverse as graphic designer and website design to marketing data analyst and public relations manager in addition to emerging positions such as digital object producer or digital production manager. The design of our proposed program takes this into account by offering students the opportunity to focus on their particular areas of interest. This greater depth of training will make graduates of the M.A. in Digital Communication program at Goucher more attractive to employers. The capstone project required for graduation involves hands-on real-world experience, and this combined with the specialized instruction is expected to translate into a mid-level management level of entry.

Individuals who earned a master's degree can expect to earn 18 percent more over their lifetime than those who have a bachelor's degree alone, regardless of academic discipline.<sup>5</sup> For the communication field, graduates with a bachelor's degree earn an

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<sup>5</sup> <https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/collegepayoff-complete.pdf>



average salary of \$55,000 per year<sup>6</sup> while those with a master’s earn an average salary of \$65,000.<sup>7</sup>

**2) Present data and analysis projecting market demand and the availability of openings in a job market to be served by the new program.**

Careers in Digital Communication encompass a wide variety of interrelated fields such as marketing and public relations, which internet culture and digital media are beginning to dominate. The Public Relations Society of America predicts that “in 2041, all media will be digital.”<sup>8</sup> With the M.A. in Digital Communication, Goucher College intends to train the future leaders of these burgeoning industries.

The Table below shows the growing market demand and opportunities for job seekers trained in Digital Communication within the State of Maryland.

| OCCUPATION   | JOBS   |        | 2018-2028 CHANGE |        |
|--|--------|--------|------------------|--------|
|  | 2018   | 2028   | #                | %      |
| Graphic Designers  | 4,669  | 4,918  | 249              | 5.33%  |
| Public Relations Specialists   | 4,832  | 5,260  | 428              | 8.86%  |
| Public Relations and Fundraising Managers                                | 1,785  | 1,988  | 203              | 11.37% |
| Advertising, Marketing, Promotions, Public Relations, and Sales Managers | 15,848 | 17,127 | 1,279            | 8.07%  |
| Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists                       | 13,685 | 16,660 | 2,975            | 21.74% |
| Marketing Managers   | 5,499  | 5,997  | 498              | 9.06%  |
| Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations               | 54,961 | 58,286 | 3,325            | 6.05%  |
| Media and Communication Workers  | 18,481 | 19,652 | 1,171            | 6.34%  |
| Media and Communication Workers, All Others                              | 756    | 812    | 56               | 5.09%  |

**3) Discuss and provide evidence of market surveys that clearly provide quantifiable and reliable data on the educational and training needs and the anticipated number of vacancies expected over the next 5 years.**

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, “employment in media and communication occupations is expected to grow 14 percent from 2020 to 2030, faster than the average for all occupations, and will result in about 151,500 new jobs.”<sup>9</sup> For

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Degree=Bachelor%27s\\_Degree%2C\\_Communication/Salary](https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Degree=Bachelor%27s_Degree%2C_Communication/Salary)

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Degree=Master\\_of\\_Arts\\_\(MA\)%2C\\_Integrated\\_Marketing\\_Communications/Salary](https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Degree=Master_of_Arts_(MA)%2C_Integrated_Marketing_Communications/Salary)

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.prsa.org/article/looking-20-years-into-pr-s-future>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/media-and-communication/home.htm>

public relations specialists in particular, employment is projected to grow 11 percent from 2020 to 2030, faster than the average for all occupations.<sup>10</sup>

In a recent study of job postings in the field of public relations, 35.3% of jobs required social/digital media skills, 24.5% required graphic design skills, and 88.9% required written communication skills.<sup>11</sup> The communication field is rapidly changing. More than eight-in-ten Americans now get news and information from digital devices<sup>12</sup>, according to the Pew Research Center, and 53% of Americans report getting news and information from social media at least sometimes<sup>13</sup>. As Americans' news and information consumption behaviors rely more on digital media, communication professionals with expertise in that area will be more valuable than ever before, especially as these trends show no signs of slowing down.

**4) Provide data showing the current and projected supply of prospective graduates.**

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, there were 1,329 master's degrees in digital communication awarded in 2018-2019. In the area of digital media design, 488 master's degrees were awarded, and there were 257 master's degrees awarded in digital arts.<sup>14</sup>

**D. Reasonableness of Program Duplication:**

**1) Identify similar programs in the State and/or same geographical area. Discuss similarities and differences between the proposed program and others in the same degree to be awarded.**

**a. Comparative Programs at Nationwide Institutions**

| School Name              | University of Florida   | University of Southern California | New York University  | University of Georgia  | University of Washington                        |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|
| <b>Program Title</b>     | MA in Mass Communication with Social Media concentration              | MS in Digital Social Media        | MA in Media, Culture, and Communication                                  | MA in Journalism, Mass Communication – Emerging Media            | Master of Communication in Digital Media        |
| <b>Format</b>            | Full or part-time, Online   | Full-time, In person              | Full or part-time, In person   | Full or part-time, Online  | Full or part-time, In-person, Evenings/weekends |
| <b>Number of Credits</b> | 36 credits  | 32 credits                        | 36 credits   | 33 credits   | 45 credits                                      |
| <b>Tuition</b>           | \$29,367  | \$63,840                          | \$67,212   | \$24,339   | \$34,290  |
| <b>Specializations</b>   | Social Media is a concentration within the Mass Communication program | None                              | Five (5): Global Communication; Technology & Society; Media Industries & | Emerging Media is a Concentration within the Journalism and Mass | None  |

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/media-and-communication/public-relations-specialists.htm>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7492838/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/01/12/more-than-eight-in-ten-americans-get-news-from-digital-devices/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/2021/01/12/news-use-across-social-media-platforms-in-2020/>

<sup>14</sup> [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d20/tables/dt20\\_318.30.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d20/tables/dt20_318.30.asp)

|                            |                       |                      |  |                            |      |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|--|----------------------------|------|
|                            |                       |                      | Politics; Visual Culture & Sound Studies; Interaction & Experience | Communication program      |      |
| <b>Capstone Experience</b> | Social media campaign | STEM-based Portfolio | Thesis, exam, or professional writing                              | Professional-based project | None |

The proposed Digital Communication M.A. program at Goucher College would involve a hybrid format combining both in-person and online courses. Students would need 30 credits to graduate and would choose between two tracks: Digital Arts Production or Digital Strategy and Promotion. The capstone experience will be project-based.

**b. Comparative Programs in Maryland and Contiguous States**

| School Name                | Loyola University Maryland                   | Johns Hopkins University                | American University                    | Towson University                               | Temple University   |
|----------------------------|--|---|--|---|---|
| <b>Program Title</b>       | MA in Emerging Media                         | MA in Digital Media Strategy and Design | MA in Media, Technology, and Democracy | MS in Communication Management                  | MS in Digital Innovation in Marketing                               |
| <b>Format</b>              | Full or part-time; Online                    | Full or part-time; Hybrid               | Full or part-time; In-person           | In-person and Hybrid                            | Part-time; Online   |
| <b>Number of Credits</b>   | 33 credits                                   | 30 credits                              | 30 credits                             | 36 credits                                      | 30 credits  |
| <b>Tuition</b>             | \$32,835 annually                            | \$1,460 per credit hour                 | \$32,620                               | \$22,032 (MD resident); \$39,360 (out of state) | \$1,142 per credit (PA resident); \$1,276 per credit (out of state) |
| <b>Specializations</b>     | Optional certificate in Health Communication | None                                    | None                                   | None  | None  |
| <b>Capstone Experience</b> | Capstone project or research paper           | Capstone project                        | Master's thesis                        | Thesis, exam, or project                        | Team project  |

**2) Propose justification for the proposed program.**

The proposed program is unique in offering two tracks: Digital Arts Production or Digital Strategy and Promotion. Based on Goucher's commitment to liberal arts education, the core courses for the program provide a holistic foundation for the study and practice of digital communication. By touching on theory, ethics, leadership, and writing, students will have a solid understanding of the field's major concerns and practices before they undergo specialized, practical training in their chosen area. The professional focus of the capstone project tests students' abilities to produce real-world materials and puts their knowledge to work. This combination will best prepare students to be future leaders in this burgeoning industry. Lastly, the hybrid format offered by Goucher will foster community while easing access and offering flexibility for students from a variety of backgrounds and experiences.

**E. Relevance to High-demand Programs at Historically Black Institutions (HBIs):**

- 1) Discuss the program's potential impact on the implementation or maintenance of high-demand programs at HBIs.**

Goucher's M.A. in Digital Communication is not in direct competition with any high-demand program at any area HBI. Bowie State University offers a Master's degree in Organizational Communications while Morgan State University offers a Master of Arts in Journalism, but these programs have different areas of focus than the proposed program.

**F. Relevance to the identity of Historically Black Institutions (HBIs):**

**1) Discuss the program's potential impact on the uniqueness and institutional identities and missions of HBIs.**

The proposed program would have no impact on the uniqueness and institutional identities and missions of HBIs.

**G. Adequacy of Curriculum Design, Program Modality, and Related Learning Outcomes**  
(as outlined in COMAR 13B.02.03.10):

**1) Describe how the proposed program was established, and also describe the faculty who will oversee the program.**

The proposed M.A. in Digital Communication program came from a long-standing goal to launch a graduate degree within the Communication and Media Studies (CMS) department. After conducting internal and external research, the administration and faculty agreed the focus should be on the burgeoning field of digital communication. This was based upon an assessment of student interests, increasing growth in career opportunities, and existing strengths within Goucher College.

M.A. in Digital Communication students will complete 30 total credits: 12 credits from core courses, 15 credits from one of two tracks (Digital Arts Production or Digital Strategy and Promotion), and 3 credits from a Capstone. The core courses include: Social Media: Theory, Practice, and Impact; Digital Media Innovations and Leadership; Digital Ethics and Social Responsibility; Producing and Writing for Digital Media. Students in the program will possess their undergraduate degrees as a requirement for admission. In the future, we intend to develop a path for current Goucher College CMS majors to participate in an accelerated 4+1 program by earning both their Bachelor of Arts degree and a Master's in Digital Communication in just five years.

Current and former Communication and Media Studies faculty will teach the majority of the courses in the new program in addition to the graduate director and adjunct faculty with relevant industry experience as needed.

Dr. Dan Marcus, professor in the Communication and Media Studies department, will teach Digital Ethics and Social Responsibility and Topics in Digital Arts Production. Dr. Marcus received a doctorate in Media and Cultural Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His research focuses on media coverage of politics and economics and on documentary and video activism.

Dr. Danny Kimball, associate professor of Communication and Media Studies, will teach Digital Media Innovations and Leadership and Digital Culture and Technology. He has a PhD in Media and Cultural Studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His research examines the cultural politics of media policy, centered on the intersection of communications regulation, network infrastructures, and digital media.

Dr. Sonja Bozic, assistant professor of Communication and Media Studies, will teach Producing and Writing for Digital Media, Digital Arts Production, Digital Arts Management, and Topics in Digital Arts Production. She earned a doctorate in Transmedia Storytelling from Ohio University. Bozic is a multi-award-winning film-maker and has edited, directed, and produced a wide range of video forms that have been screened at festivals, including the Cannes Film Festival.

Dr. David Zurawik, professor of practice in the Communication and Media Studies department, will teach Trends in Digital Communication and Producing and Writing for Digital Media. He has a PhD in American Studies from the University of Maryland and was the media critic at the *Baltimore Sun* for 32 years. Currently, he is a media analyst for CNN.

Dr. Cara Dickason completed her doctorate in screen cultures at Northwestern University and her M.A. in English at Georgetown University. At Northwestern, she was a Mellon Fellow in Gender and Sexuality Studies, and she taught courses on race, gender, sexuality, and media. She previously taught English and composition at Trinity Washington University, Prince George's Community College, and Georgetown. Her teaching and research interests include digital technology and surveillance, television spectatorship, girls' and women's media, and mixed-race and Middle Eastern identity in popular culture.

Dr. Darcey Morris developed and taught one of the core courses, Social Media: Theory, Practice, and Impact, at the undergraduate level. She will teach that course at the graduate level as well as: Digital Media Innovations and Leadership, Digital Ethics and Social Responsibility, Digital Audience Research, Digital Culture and Technology, Digital Branding, Digital Strategy and Promotion, and Meta Certified Digital Marketing and Media Planning. She holds a PhD in Moving Image Studies from Georgia State University. Her research includes media industries, new media studies, and social media, and she has almost a decade of professional work experience in public relations and communication strategy.

**2) Describe educational objectives and learning outcomes appropriate to the rigor, breadth, and (modality) of the program.**

Educational Objectives:

- Create written and visual digital content to achieve organizational goals
- Understand basic principles for digital communication involved in outreach via web, mobile, and social media for production and/or promotional purposes
- Apply knowledge about the impact of digital communication in ethical, socially responsible ways and in pursuit of beneficial change
- Identify appropriate metrics for promotional campaigns and driving valuable, measurable action
- Create compelling stories across media platforms to influence key stakeholders
- Develop evidence-based digital communication strategies, including measurement, optimization, and implementation
- Lead and manage projects that leverage digital technologies to engage audiences and propel them to act

Learning Outcomes:

- Explore how digital communication and emerging media technologies impact society, businesses, and individuals in complex ways
- Examine the cultural, social, political, economic, and technological effects that current digital communication trends and cutting-edge developments can impart
- Assess digital content based on a sophisticated understanding of visual aesthetics, design logic, organizational principles, tenets of effective communication, and persuasive power
- Analyze sophisticated audience research including data analytics to direct engagement and build consistent brand relationships
- Develop a clear and compelling strategic vision to deliver meaningful results for organizations, accomplish institutional goals, and innovate customer/client connections

**3) Explain how the institution will:**

- a. Provide for assessment of student achievement of learning outcomes in the program;**
- b. Document student achievement of learning outcomes in the program;**
- c. Document student achievement.**

Goucher College has a comprehensive and sustained process for assessing student learning outcomes in all courses and programs that is overseen by the Assessment Committee in collaboration with the Institutional Assessment Team and framed by the College Assessment Plan. All assessment is completed on a regular annual cycle of course and program analysis consistent with core and program outcomes for students. The program will be included in the College annual assessment process, the college program review process, and the annual course and faculty evaluation process.

**4) Provide a list of courses with title, semester credit hours, and course descriptions, along with a description of program requirements.**

The proposed program requires students to complete 30 total credits: 12 credits from core courses, 15 credits from each track, and 3 credits from the Capstone. For the Capstone, student complete a professional-quality project under faculty supervision that demonstrates their knowledge and digital communication skills. This will provide students with foundational knowledge of the major issues and basic qualifications needed for work in digital communication while allowing them to take more specialized classes that focus on particular skills and give them expertise in a narrower field of study.

**Core Courses:**

DCOM 6XX: Social Media Theory, Practice, and Impact  
DCOM 6XX: Digital Media Innovations and Leadership  
DCOM 6XX: Digital Ethics and Social Responsibility  
DCOM 6XX: Producing and Writing for Digital Media  
DCOM 6XX: Capstone

**Choose from two tracks: Digital Arts Production or Digital Strategy and Promotion.**

### **Digital Arts Production:**

*Three* required courses:

DCOM 6XX: Digital Arts Production

DCOM 6XX: Digital Arts Management

Either: DCOM 6XX: Graphic Design for Digital Media – OR – DCOM 6XX: Website Design and Development

*Two* electives

### **Digital Strategy and Promotion:**

*Three* required courses:

DCOM 6XX: Digital Strategy and Promotion

DCOM 6XX: Meta Certified Digital Marketing and Media Planning

DCOM 6XX: Digital Audience Research

*Two* electives

### **Electives:**

DCOM 6XX: Digital Media Workshop

DCOM 6XX: Topics in Digital Arts Production

DCOM 6XX: Trends in Digital Communication

DCOM 6XX: Digital Strategy and Promotion

DCOM 6XX: Meta Certified Digital Marketing and Media Planning

DCOM 6XX: Digital Audience Research

DCOM 6XX: Digital Culture and Technology

DCOM 6XX: Trends in Digital Communication

DCOM 6XX: Digital Branding

DCOM 6XX: Internship

AAD 612: Marketing the Arts

APA 6XX: Data Management and Visualization

The M.A. in Digital Communication can be completed full-time or part-time. The hybrid in-person, online format allows for greater accessibility and flexibility.

### **Course Descriptions:**

#### **DCOM 6XX: Social Media: Theory, Practice, and Impact (3 credits)**

Relying on new media theories and research, students explore social media as cultural phenomenon with great economic impact. The class examines how the use of social media impacts culture, politics, industries, social institutions, and everyday lives and how businesses strategically use digital communication.

#### **DCOM 6XX: Digital Media Innovations and Leadership**

Students will learn about emerging trends in digital media and cutting-edge developments as they prepare to be institutional leaders in digital communication. The course readings encompass digital entrepreneurship, organizational management, and the business of creativity.

**DCOM 6XX: Digital Ethics and Social Responsibility**

As technology plays an increasingly important role in society and within businesses, ethical communication practice is more necessary than ever. Students will learn about corporate social responsibility in the digital world and interrogate existing moral dilemmas in digital communication.

**DCOM 6XX: Producing and Writing for Digital Media (3 credits)**

In this skills-based course, students learn the basic principles and practices involved in digital media content production including digital design logic and writing for digital platforms.

**DCOM 6XX: Capstone (3 credits)**

Under direct faculty supervision, students will apply the skills and practices they've learned in the master's program to plan and execute a digital communication project. This should be taken in the last semester of the student's coursework.

**DCOM 6XX: Digital Arts Production (3 credits)**

Designed for the 21st-century production approach for aspiring producers, marketers, and storytellers, this course explores the current developments and potential uses of new media storytelling from inception through implementation and distribution. Using an interdisciplinary approach to development and production methodology, the students will get a skillset applicable in digital media production regardless of technology.

**DCOM 6XX: Digital Arts Management (3 credits)**

This course introduces students to the current management and uses of digital communication tools, combining theory and practice. Students will explore the impact of new technologies on businesses and cultures and learn how to use social media, websites, and mobile applications to achieve organizational goals.

**DCOM 6XX: Digital Media Workshop (3 credits) (COM 412)**

This course provides students with the practical skills to use digital media to communicate effectively. Along with learning those hands-on skills, students will also be provided with a theoretical and ethical grounding in the social responsibilities connected with using those skills in a way that helps provide citizens with reliable, verified, and trustworthy information.

**DCOM 6XX: Graphic Design for Digital Media (3 credits)**

This course introduces students to graphic design principles and elements, the function of visual design, color theory and typography, basic digital layout techniques, and best practices for mobile app design. Students will tackle design projects with creativity, strategy, and technology.

**DCOM 6XX: Website Design and Development (3 credits)**

Students will learn coding using HTML and CSS, among other methods, for the creation of dynamic, responsive websites.

**DCOM 6XX: Topics in Digital Arts Production (3 credits)**

This course concentrates on an intensive study of a specific practice, technology, or skill related to digital arts production.

**DCOM 6XX: Digital Audience Research (3 credits)**



This course teaches students how to analyze digital media data and how to turn that data into insights for strategic reach. Students will review digital analytics for websites, social media, apps, and content marketing while exploring trends in audience behavior and digital media usage. They will also study basic data visualization principles.

**DCOM 6XX: Digital Culture and Technology (3 credits)**

Examining the cultural impact of digital communication and technology, this course will take a historical look at the evolution of digital media technologies, who made them and why, and user engagement. Issues covered include cyber culture, virtual reality, AI, and remix culture.

**DCOM 6XX: Trends in Digital Communication (3 credits)**

In an industry that's constantly changing, it is vital to stay on the forefront of the latest trends. This course considers cutting-edge issues such as new technologies and platforms, evolving business practices, interactivity, the Internet of Things, and the latest privacy and security concerns while seeking to understand how organizations can best leverage such trends to engage with customers and drive better business outcomes.

**DCOM 6XX: Meta Certified Digital Marketing and Media Planning (3 credits)**

This course will be taught by a Goucher College faculty member and utilizes resources designed by Meta specifically for students seeking careers in digital marketing. In the course, students will learn to create, manage, and support ads on Meta's platforms as well as design media strategies that align with business goals and marketing plans. Course materials will include materials provided by Meta in addition to case studies and other supplemental readings. Students will have the option to take one or two Meta Certified Professional Exams upon completion of the course.

**DCOM 6XX: Digital Strategy and Promotion (3 credits)**

Students will learn how to create strategic digital communication activities based on evidence, emerging technologies, and platform-specific principles in support of organizational goals. The course explores content strategy, digital monetization models, audience targeting, and promotional tactics.

**DCOM 6XX: Digital Branding (3 credits)**

As marketing transitions from a reliance on traditional media to digital media, this course focuses on how companies today execute branding and promotional campaigns in the digital economy. Students will learn about the challenges of managing a digital brand and the use of emerging technologies and data analytics to engage with consumers.

**DCOM 6XX: Internship (3 credits)**

Internships based on previous Digital Communication coursework are available and recommended to best prepare students for work in the digital field.

**AAD 612: Marketing the Arts (3 credits)**

This Arts Administration course examines the development of internal and external marketing plans. It considers various approaches to maximize impact for different types, styles, and sizes of arts organizations. It examines the most productive uses of all forms of media. The course focuses on audience development and demographics, market segmentation, relationship products, promotional tools and tactics, e-marketing and uses of social media, research, customer service, and media relations.

**APA 6XX: Data Management and Visualization (3 credits)**

This course will introduce students to data gathering and visualization processes. Real world data can be messy. All data tells a story, and how that story is told depends on how the data is collected, tested, and presented. Being able to properly handle data in various formats and being able to decipher good data from bad data is critically important. Students will learn how to gather data from various sources to answer real-world questions and present their findings in written and presentation form.

**5) Discuss how general education requirements will be met, if applicable.**

Not applicable.

**6) Identify any specialized accreditation or graduate certificate requirements for this program and its students.**

Not applicable.

**7) If contracting with another institution or non-collegiate organization, provide a copy of the written contract.**

We have been in communication with a representative from Meta about using some of their resources in conjunction with supplemental academic materials in our Meta Certified Digital Marketing and Media Planning class. They have offered to provide at least 25 vouchers per year for our students to take their certification exams, should they choose. This is not an official partnership, thus, there is no legal contract needed.

**8) Provide assurance and any appropriate evidence that the proposed program will provide students with clear, complete, and timely information on the curriculum, course and degree requirements, nature of faculty/student interaction, assumptions about technology competence and skills, technical equipment requirements, learning management system, availability of academic support services and financial aid resources, and cost and payment policies.**

Students may register and pay for courses, access their registration and financial aid information, access their faculty and key staff, seek advice and answers to academic and administrative questions, and access technology support online or in person. All course materials and information can be obtained online through the Canvas learning management system. Catalogs and college policy and requirements are all accessible online through the Goucher College website.

**9) Provide assurance and any appropriate evidence that advertising, recruiting, and admissions materials will clearly and accurately represent the proposed program and the services available.**

The full-time graduate director of the proposed program will work with the admissions and communication offices of the college to ensure all advertising, recruiting, and admissions materials that have been specifically designed for this program will clearly and accurately represent it. In addition, the graduate director of the program will ensure program web pages always contain up-to-date, relevant information. As with the Communication and Media Studies undergraduate program, the Digital Communication faculty will meet with prospective graduate students virtually, on campus, and during

individual visits and recruitment events, to discuss the curriculum and available campus resources.

#### **H. Adequacy of Articulation:**

- 1) If applicable, discuss how the program supports articulation with programs of partner institutions. Provide all relevant articulation agreements.**

Not applicable.

#### **I. Adequacy of Faculty Resources:**

- 1) Provide a brief narrative demonstrating the quality of program faculty. Include a summary list of faculty with appointment type, terminal degree title and field, academic title/rank, status (full-time, part-time, adjunct) and the course(s) each faculty member will teach (in this program).**

See question G. 1.

- 2) Demonstrate how the institution will provide ongoing pedagogy training for faculty in evidence-based best practices, including training in:**
  - a. Pedagogy that meets the needs of the students;**

Goucher's Center for the Advancement of Scholarship and Teaching regularly hosts faculty development workshops, trainings, and symposiums. The center prioritizes teaching faculty evidence-based approaches that improve the performance and engagement of all students. These approaches include: active learning; problem-based learning; retrieving, predicting, and interleaving; inclusive teaching; and metacognition.

- b. The learning management system;**

The learning management system used at Goucher is Canvas LMS by Instructure. Faculty post syllabi and assignments on Canvas while many also utilize other features such as rubrics, modules, quizzes, and analytics. This management system is used by all Goucher faculty for both in-person and online classes.

- c. Evidence-based best practices for distance education, if distance education is offered.**

Goucher provides distance learning resources to support students taking online classes and the faculty teaching such courses. The Center for the Advancement of Scholarship & Teaching (C.A.S.T.) has instructional designers who work directly with faculty to facilitate distance learning. These instructional designers assist faculty with the development of syllabi and teaching modules and help them infuse best online teaching practices.

#### **J. Adequacy of Library Resources**

- 1) Describe the library resources available and/or the measures to be taken to ensure resources are adequate to support the proposed program. If the program is to be implemented within existing institutional resources, include a supportive statement by the President for library resources to meet the program's needs.**

The Goucher College Library's mission is to provide comprehensive resources and services in support of the research, teaching, and learning needs of the Goucher College community. The library's resources include 96,000 electronic journals; 59,000 media materials and streaming files; 140 research databases; 199,000 print titles; and 240,000 eBooks. Additional resources include the Digital Library and eScholarship@goucher, the college's institutional repository, which together have a combined total of over 10,000 digital items. Onsite holdings are supplemented by interlibrary loan and the college's membership in the Baltimore Area Library Consortium. Goucher College is prepared to support this new program with its existing library resources and partnerships. The library has a dedicated staff member to manage all programs, including the proposed M.A. in Digital Communication, and supports students' research endeavors with direct assistance and instruction.

**K. Adequacy of Physical Facilities, Infrastructure, and Instructional Equipment** (as outlined in COMAR 13B.02.03.13):

- 1) Provide an assurance that physical facilities, infrastructure and instruction equipment are adequate to initiate the program, particularly as related to spaces for classrooms, staff and faculty offices, and laboratories for studies in the technologies and sciences. If the program is to be implemented within existing institutional resources, include a supportive statement by the President for adequate equipment and facilities to meet the program's needs.**

The proposed program will share existing faculty, infrastructure, and physical facilities. This includes a Digital Arts Classroom with a wide array of software available, a three-camera television studio, and a new digital audio recording studio.

- 2) Provide assurance and any appropriate evidence that the institution will ensure students enrolled in and faculty teaching in distance education will have adequate access to:**

- a. An institutional electronic mailing system, and**

Goucher College uses Microsoft Outlook as its electronic mail system, and all students and faculty receive email addresses in addition to any necessary information technology support. All official Goucher College correspondence with online faculty and students is sent through this system.

- b. A learning management system that provides the necessary technological support for distance education.**

All online courses are delivered through the Canvas learning management system. Instructional designers are available to support students and faculty with online education. 24/7 support Canvas staff is also available so students and faculty have assistance whenever they may need it.

**L. Adequacy of Financial Resources with Documentation** (as outlined in COMAR 13B.02.03.14):

- 1) Complete [Finance Table 1: Resources and Narrative Rationale](#). Provide finance data for the first five years of program implementation. Enter figures into each cell and provide a total for each year. Also provide a narrative rationale for each resource category. If resources have been or will be reallocated to support the proposed program, briefly discuss the sources of those funds.**

The proposed program does not anticipate the use of funds reallocated to run the program, nor does it expect the enrollment of full-time students or the arrival of external or other funding sources. Projected enrollments are based on market research.

| <b>TABLE 1: PROGRAM RESOURCES</b>                |               |               |               |               |               |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Resource Categories</b>                       | <b>Year 1</b> | <b>Year 2</b> | <b>Year 3</b> | <b>Year 4</b> | <b>Year 5</b> |
| 1. Reallocated Funds                             | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             |
| 2. Tuition/Fee Revenue<br>(c + g below)          | \$212,625     | \$396,900     | \$439,425     | \$481,950     | \$552,825     |
| a. Number of F/T Students                        | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             |
| b. Annual Tuition/Fee Rate                       | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             |
| c. Total F/T Revenue<br>(a x b)                  | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             |
| d. Number of P/T Students                        | 15            | 28            | 31            | 34            | 39            |
| e. Credit Hour Rate                              | \$945         | \$945         | \$945         | \$945         | \$945         |
| f. Annual Credit Hour Rate                       | 15            | 15            | 15            | 15            | 15            |
| g. Total P/T Revenue<br>(d x e x f)              | \$212,625     | \$396,900     | \$439,425     | \$481,950     | \$552,825     |
| 3. Grants, Contracts &<br>Other External Sources | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             |
| 4. Other Sources                                 | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             | 0             |
| TOTAL (Add 1 – 4)                                | \$212,625     | \$396,900     | \$439,425     | \$481,950     | \$552,825     |

- 2) Complete [Finance Table 2: Program Expenditures and Narrative Rationale](#). Provide finance data for the first five years of program implementation. Enter figures into each cell and provide a total for each year. Also provide a narrative rationale for each expenditure category.

A full-time graduate director will be hired to lead this proposed master's program. Existing faculty will offer some courses for this proposed program, and adjunct faculty salaries are included in 1.b. Further, the proposed program does not require any new administrative or support staff, nor does it anticipate the need for additional technical support or space for its operation. However, there are expenses associated with the operation costs of the program and its marketing and recruitment.

| <b>TABLE 2: PROGRAM EXPENDITURES</b> |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Expenditure Categories</b>        | <b>Year 1</b>    | <b>Year 2</b>    | <b>Year 3</b>    | <b>Year 4</b>    | <b>Year 5</b>    |
| 1. Faculty (b + c below)             | \$69,680         | \$145,888        | \$151,756        | \$157,889        | \$164,299        |
| a. Number of FTE                     | 0.5              | 1.5              | 1.5              | 1.5              | 1.5              |
| b. Total Salary                      | \$57,468         | \$121,650        | \$126,408        | \$131,377        | \$136,567        |
| c. Total Benefits                    | \$12,212         | \$24,237         | \$25,348         | \$26,512         | \$27,732         |
| 2. Admin. Staff (b + c below)        | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                |
| a. Number of FTE                     | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                |
| b. Total Salary                      | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                |
| c. Total Benefits                    | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                |
| 3. Support Staff (b + c below)       | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                |
| a. Number of FTE                     | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                |
| b. Total Salary                      | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                |
| c. Total Benefits                    | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                |
| 4. Technical Support and Equipment   | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                |
| 5. Library                           | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                |
| 6. New or Renovated Space            | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                | 0                |
| 7. Other Expenses                    | \$70,393         | \$87,608         | \$94,813         | \$102,466        | \$103,169        |
| <b>TOTAL (Add 1 – 7)</b>             | <b>\$140,073</b> | <b>\$233,496</b> | <b>\$246,569</b> | <b>\$260,355</b> | <b>\$267,469</b> |

**M. Adequacy of Provisions for Evaluation of Program** (as outlined in COMAR 13B.02.03.15):

- 1) Discuss procedures for evaluating courses, faculty, and student learning outcomes.**
- 2) Explain how the institution will evaluate the proposed program's educational effectiveness, including assessments of student learning outcomes, student retention, student and faculty satisfaction, and cost-effectiveness.**

Goucher College has a systematic and sustainable system to assess teaching and learning at all levels and within all units of the institution, in compliance with MSCHE standards for assessment. Learning outcomes will be assessed in this program using evidence-based rubrics applied to individual and group projects, portfolios, and papers. Faculty and courses will be regularly evaluated by students, and all faculty will be observed in class annually by peers/administrators. The program will be reviewed periodically by outside evaluators. Data collected through assessment and evaluations processes on an annual basis are used to identify opportunities for program improvements and areas where additional resources are needed. The program will also make use of the statistics gathered by the college's Office of Institutional Effectiveness and the Provost's office to analyze results and trends in enrollment and student success.

**N. Consistency with the State's Minority Student Achievement Goals** (as outlined in COMAR 13B.02.03.05):

- 1) Discuss how the proposed program addresses minority student access and success, and the institution's cultural diversity goals and initiatives.**

The proposed program and Goucher College have a strong commitment to promoting diversity in our recruitment, admission and retention efforts of students, as well as in faculty hiring. The college has successfully recruited minority students via the Video Application (which seeks to eliminate many of the barriers certain minorities face in applying) and specific outreach to local institutions. These efforts have been successful, with 39% of students identifying as non-white in 2019, from 28% in 2014. Among students who identify as African-American, there were 227 applicants in 2018 (17%), up from 145 applicants in 2014 (10%). Among students in the class of 2022 who disclosed their race, 42% self-identified as students of color. The school has also established a Center for Race, Equity and Identity (CREI). This center supports all marginalized students and has established and ongoing programming for students of color, first-generation, socioeconomically disadvantaged, international and disabled students.

The college has made efforts in educating its faculty around racial issues through a variety of workshops and seminars. Faculty will be recruited and hired for the program with an emphasis on diverse candidates, a practice that will continue during implementation and program delivery, to attract and retain qualified faculty from diverse racial, socioeconomic, and geographical backgrounds.

Issues of representation and access regarding minority and marginalized populations pervade our academic field and are regularly discussed in Center classrooms. We plan on the course on Race and Digital Culture to fulfill a significant major requirement and to gain status as fulfilling the college-wide requirement in taking a course on Race, Power, and Perspective.

**O. Relationship to Low Productivity Programs Identified by the Commission:**

- 1) If the proposed program is directly related to an identified low productivity program, discuss how the fiscal resources (including faculty, administration,**

**library resources, and general operating expenses) may be redistributed to this program.**

Not applicable.

**P. Adequacy of Distance Education Programs** (as outlined in COMAR 13B.02.03.22):

**1) Provide affirmation and any appropriate evidence that the institution is eligible to provide Distance Education.**

Goucher College is authorized by both MSCHE and MHEC to offer distance education programs.

**2) Provide assurance and any appropriate evidence that the institution complies with the C-RAC guidelines, particularly as it relates to the proposed program.**

**a) Online learning is appropriate to the institution's mission and purposes.**

The proposed program aligns closely with Goucher College's mission of providing "an innovative liberal arts education that prepares students with a broad, humane perspective for a life of inquiry, creativity, and critical and analytical thinking." To that end, Goucher College has adopted the *C-RAC Guidelines for the Evaluation of Distance Education*<sup>15</sup> and, as a member of Maryland Online, relies on the Quality Matters Standards for the design, development, and delivery of all online courses and programs. Course development follows the criteria outlined in the Quality Matters (QM) rubric and goes through an internal peer-reviewed process (QM qualified reviewers) prior to delivery. Faculty wishing to teach online are required to complete QM training, and an instructional designer supports faculty with course development.

**b) The institution's plans for developing, sustaining, and, if appropriate, expanding online learning offerings are integrated into its regular planning and evaluation processes.**

Goucher College currently offers six graduate degrees and seven certificates that heavily rely on distance education. A few of them are fully online, and each new graduate program is designed to include distance learning. These programs, in fact, are identified in the College's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan,<sup>16</sup> which calls for making the necessary investments to support them.

**c) Online learning is incorporated into the institution's systems of governance and academic oversight.**

Goucher's Graduate Studies Committee, a body of elected faculty members, provides oversight of all graduate programs, regardless of its modality of instruction.

**d) Curricula for the institution's online learning offerings are coherent, cohesive, and comparable in academic rigor to programs offered in traditional instructional formats.**

Goucher College has been offering online program for 25 years, and the success of

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<sup>15</sup> <https://sacscoc.org/app/uploads/2020/09/Guidelines-for-Evaluation-of-Distance-Education.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> <https://strategicplan.goucher.edu/wp-content/uploads/Goucher-College-Strategic-Plan-2021-2025.pdf>



these online programs comes in part from their academic rigor, which results from the close collaboration that exists between faculty and instructional designers as well as the incorporation of evidence-based standards of quality for online instruction (i.e., Quality Matters).

**e) The institution evaluates the effectiveness of its online learning offerings, including the extent to which the online learning goals are achieved, and uses the results of its evaluations to enhance the attainment of the goals.**

At the end of each academic year, the Program Director and faculty will evaluate the progress students have made toward achieving learning goals, an evaluation that will rely on evidence-based rubrics, which will be used to rate assignments in each class. Based on these results and course evaluations submitted by students, the program will make the necessary modifications, which will be implemented with the help of instructional designers. This process will operate iteratively each year.

**f) Faculty responsible for delivering the online learning curricula and evaluating the students' success in achieving the online learning goals are appropriately qualified and effectively supported.**

All faculty who will teach for the proposed program would have at least five years of teaching experience and will have terminal degrees in their fields. These faculty will be supported by CAST, which offers mandatory workshops as well as professional development opportunities. CAST relies on evidence-based approaches that improve the performance and engagement of all students.

**g) The institution provides effective student and academic services to support students enrolled in online learning offerings.**

Students admitted into Goucher's graduate programs receive an orientation to online learning, including the use of Canvas, Goucher's learning management tool. Students also receive support from an academic advisor, who helps them navigate the curriculum and assists them with career opportunities; librarians who aid students with the electronic resources available to them at the library; graduate financial aid experts, who help students with financial matters; accessibility services specialists, who provide appropriate accommodations that permit students to have an equal academic opportunity; and career advisors, who guide them through different career path options.

**h) The institution provides sufficient resources to support and, if appropriate, expand its online learning offerings.**

Goucher College regularly embarks on a multi-year budgetary exercise that includes sufficient resources to maintain existing online program and to support new ones. Funds are allocated for marketing, outreach, recruitment, salaries, instructional and technology support, finance, administration, and cybersecurity, among others. Funds are also allocated for exploring new online programs and new course development as illustrated in Tables 1 and 2 (Sections L 1 and L 2).

**i) The institution assures the integrity of its online offerings.**

Upon acceptance, students receive a unique ID and password to access Goucher's network, Canvas, and the registration system. Before starting each class, students must verify their identity, and instructors are responsible for corroborating the integrity of the work submitted by students, who are regularly reminded in each

course about Goucher policies regarding plagiarism. In addition, Goucher College adheres to all FERPA regulations.