

## MEMORANDUM

**TO: Members of the Board of Trustees** **April 23, 2002**  
**FROM: Robert L. King**  
**SUBJECT: Master Plan Amendment for State University College at Old Westbury**

I recommend that the Board of Trustees adopt the following resolution:

Resolved that the State University of New York Master Plan be, and hereby is, amended to authorize the State University College at Old Westbury to offer instruction leading to the Master of Science degree in Accounting in the discipline area of Business; and, be it further

Resolved that the Chancellor be, and hereby is, authorized to transmit this amendment to the Board of Regents and the Governor for incorporation in the State University Master Plan.

### Background

Approval of this resolution will authorize the State University College at Old Westbury to offer a Master of Science degree in Accounting, subject to the approval of the Board of Regents. A Master Plan amendment is necessary as the curriculum represents the College's first program at the graduate level and a change in institutional mission.

In 1964, the State University Board of Trustees established a new college in arts and science in Nassau County which, according to the Master Plan, would serve residential as well as commuter students in a region "characterized by rapid population growth, by the tradition of sending an unusually large percentage of its youth to college, and by the presence of a high proportion of professional people." These same factors, according to the Plan, would be taken into consideration in determining whether additional graduate programs would be needed in the region. It is fitting, therefore, that the inaugural graduate program for the College at Old Westbury be a Master of Science degree in Accounting, designed principally to

serve a part-time, working clientele in an increasingly evolving, high-demand profession, and built upon the demonstrated expertise of the College's undergraduate program in the field.

The College is proposing a vigorous yet flexible course of study that includes a 36-credit hour track for accounting graduates and a 58-credit hour track for non-accounting, business or liberal arts and science graduates. The design of the curriculum incorporates issues critical to today's professional practice of accounting, including the impact of information technology and globalization of markets, and a portfolio of skills in assurance services, financial planning, and information systems. The College projects a first-year enrollment of 43 (30 part-time) with a fifth year enrollment of 84 (over 60 part-time). The College at Old Westbury is committed to achieving accreditation of the undergraduate and graduate programs by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International (AACSB) in seven years, requiring a further investment in the curriculum that includes four additional doctorally-qualified faculty with research experience, capital and equipment expenditures, and library resource development. A team of two external reviewers evaluated the proposed program and recognized the program potential particularly given the College's exemplary record in pass rates on CPA exams and on the faculty hiring plans.

The New York State Department of Labor's Occupational Outlook for Long Island (Nassau and Suffolk Counties) for 1998-2008 projects over 2,000 openings for accountants and auditors annually; for New York City the projection is over 12,000 annual openings. Driving the need for a master's degrees in accounting is the change in New York State Regulations related to public accountancy. Beginning in 2009, an individual seeking New York State licensure as a certified public accountant must have completed an approved 150-credit hour program, such as the College is proposing. It is anticipated that the need for a public access graduate degree program will drive and sustain the College's planned enrollment in the curriculum. Sixty percent of the program enrollment is expected to derive from the College's own graduates, particularly from among the business majors, about 85-90% of which are transfers from neighboring community colleges. The proposed program and the change in mission for the College at Old Westbury complements expertise at sister State University institutions. There are no similar programs at the State University College of Technology at Farmingdale or at the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

The Master of Science degree in Accounting is consistent with the history and evolution of the College at Old Westbury in serving the educational and economic needs of the Nassau and Suffolk Counties. The proposed program is also fully consistent with the College's Mission Review Memorandum of Understanding signed in December 2000.