**Gallaudet University**

**Stage 1: New Program: Preliminary Proposal**

The New Program Preliminary Proposal is submitted via the Office of Academic Quality to the **New Program Review Committee** (NPRC) consisting of the following members: the Chief Enrollment and Marketing Officer, Provost, University Budget Director, Senate representative, and the appropriate Dean(s).

1. **Suggested Name of Program**: Masters of Arts in International Development
2. **Suggested Program Administrative Home** (Department and/or College): Graduate School and Professional Programs (This is an Interdisciplinary program so the administrative home should reflect that.)

1. **Program Type**
   1. Undergraduate major
   2. Undergraduate distinct minor
   3. **Graduate Master’s degree**
   4. Graduate certificate
   5. Graduate/Research Doctoral degree (PhD)
2. **Mode of Delivery (check all that apply)**
   1. **On-campus (Note: One course is taught online EDF 773: Gender, Disability and Development)**
   2. Distance Education
      1. Hybrid (some on-campus; 50% or more through distance education)
      2. Fully distance education (typically on-line)
         1. Synchronous
         2. Asynchronous
3. **Intended Audience** (*check all that apply*)
   1. Students holding a baccalaureate degree
   2. **Students seeking a master’s degree**
   3. Students currently enrolled in an approved graduate program at Gallaudet
   4. Students who are seeking PST credit
   5. Students not enrolled in a graduate program and not intending to enroll in graduate degree program
   6. Other, please describe \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. **Degree/Product**
   1. Student receives an undergraduate degree
   2. **Student receives graduate degree**
   3. Student receives a certificate or other product
5. **Rationale for Program:**

Dean Erting gave great support to the completion of a comprehensive five-year review[[1]](#footnote-1) of the current International Development Program to learn how to strengthen its infrastructure. Meanwhile, the university restructuring placed the International Development program under “interdisciplinary programs.” The five-year review of the International Development program suggested changes which would require significant additional resources. Therefore, we are submitting a New Program Preliminary Proposal for a Master of Arts in International Development rather than a Revised Program Proposal.

Society’s response to the 15% of the world’s population who are deaf or living with a disability has changed tremendously in the past forty years largely as a result of Disabled People’s Organizations (DPOs) advocating for their civil rights. Today we hear and see from all corners of the earth the two maxims, “Nothing about us without us” and “Deaf/Disability rights are human rights.” In the past ten years, international development organization and federal agencies, such as the US State Department, the US Agency for International Development (USAID), UNICEF, and the World Bank, are creating new positions filled by professionals charged with increasing the inclusion of people with disabilities in their governments and civil society. During Gallaudet’s African Conference in April 2012, Deaf leaders highlighted federal laws mandating an increase in Deaf representation in African State governments. President Obama’s signature on the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of Persons (CRPD) united the US with 153 other State signatories that recognize disability rights are human rights. The US Senate will soon determine if the US joins the 117 other nations that have already ratified the CRPD. This summer the National Association of the Deaf, USAID, the World Bank, the International AIDS conference and various nongovernmental organizations held workshops, presentations, or forums focused on using the CRPD and other international instruments to “promote, protect, and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by people with disabilities and to promote respect for their inherent dignity”.

As the result of the five-year review, which included feedback from ID graduates and development professionals, the new International Development program’s paradigm will shift away from “disability” as the central feature of the program and toward better systems of inclusion and social justice/ human rights for Deaf persons and their communities, persons with disabilities and other marginalized populations. Feedback also suggests students add a core specialization for better opportunity for employment, thus the establishment of three specializations which will prepare development workers to work in the increasingly specialized and competitive positions of Research and Evaluation, Community Development, or Disability Policy. Core courses will continue to include knowledge and issues concerning all people with disabilities, but will add a new emphasis of training professionals to work with Deaf communities and to engage in project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation centered on users of signed languages in a variety of cultural contexts.

Whereas Gallaudet was the only university to offer a degree or courses about deaf/disability and development, the recent attention to the future impact of the CRPD has influenced other universities to add this topic to their curricula. Gallaudet is ahead of the curve in offering a MA degree in International Development and no other university teaches nor does research with and about Deaf communities with more integrity than Gallaudet University. Gallaudet has already established a name and is respected in the field of international development. With its solid reputation, a newly structured degree whose design is based on extensive research, and with additional resources, the International Development program would increase enrollment; set a strong foundation for future growth of the program, and better prepare our graduates for employment in the field of development.

1. **Goals of the Program:**
2. To prepare students to work with federal agencies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and locally-based groups to design, implement, monitor and evaluate capacity-building activities and systems oriented toward social inclusion and social justice.
3. To attract students who are members of underrepresented groups and international students with curriculum that addresses their experiences and perspectives and to prepare them to work more effectively in their communities.
4. To support Gallaudet’s Vision of growing research and “improving the lives and knowledge of all deaf and hard of hearing people worldwide” in preparing professionals to work with Deaf communities overseas in understanding their sign languages, training interpreters, building capacity of community members, offering appropriate technology, and creating new areas of research.
5. To establish the foundations for increased interdisciplinarity on campus contributing to harnessing connections between disciplinary-specific knowledge sets—a growing trend reflected throughout higher education and professional training programs.
6. To increase the number of students in the International Development MA program by offering three new specializations and a curriculum matching the needs of employers in the field.
7. To increase collaboration with the federal government, domestic and international agencies and organizations.
8. To develop an academic partnership with American University.
9. To “engage and embrace the larger world beyond our walls through partnerships and outreach on all levels, encouraging our students, faculty and staff to be fully engaged participants in their local, national and global communities” both in DC and overseas.
10. To allow students and instructors to work together developing materials, programs and partnerships internationally through their internships overseas, through technology (Webinar/World Deaf Information Project), and collaboration with Disabled Person’s Organizations (DPOs), the federal government, and development assistance organizations in the US and in other countries.

1. Five-year Comprehensive program review (2010), ID program survey (Winter 2011), and an analysis of surveys and interviews with experts and professionals in the field of international development (Winter 2011-Spring 2012). The review is available upon request. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)