November 30, 2017

TO: Michael Galchinsky  
Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness  
Georgia State University

FROM: Debra Cannon  
Director  
Cecil B. Day School of Hospitality  
Robinson College of Business

RE: Letter from Department Director for APR Self-Study

In accordance with the Georgia State University policy for undergoing Academic Program Reviews, the School of Hospitality began the process with an “Academic Program Review Orientation” held on April 14, 2017. The Self-Study Report was developed over the following seven months. A focus of the School’s annual faculty retreat, held on August 18, was the Academic Program Review as were the fall semester departmental faculty meetings.

The input from faculty, staff and students has been extremely valuable in writing the APR Self-Study. It was a very worthwhile reflection and analysis of the review period of 2014 through 2016. In some cases, it was appropriate to include information from 2013 as well as extending certain information into 2017. The School of Hospitality’s last Academic Program Review was done in conjunction with our reaccreditation visit through the Accreditation Commission for Programs in Hospitality Administration (ACPHA.) The Self-Study for the reaccreditation was written in 2014 with the external review team’s visit in 2015.

Where the School of Hospitality Is Now

It is an important time for the School. Achievements have included being named one of the top-ranked programs in the Southeast, nation and globally for both undergraduate and graduate studies. External funding efforts have been reasonably successful with a $1 million gift resulting in the naming of the Regynald G. Washington Masters in Global Hospitality Management Program in 2015. In 2016, it was announced that the School of Hospitality will initially be the one academic program with facilities at the Georgia State Stadium which will encompass primarily culinary and event management labs, dedicated classrooms as well as additional allocated space.

The School of Hospitality is one of ten programs in the U.S. dually accredited by AACSB and ACPHA. The School was first accredited by ACPHA in 1992 and has consistently been reaccredited successfully (2000, 2007, 2015). The School has been in the College of Business since 1995.

Career opportunities for graduates from the undergraduate and Master’s program are very good and the School supports many opportunities for students to meet and interview with hospitality companies. One of the School’s biggest strengths is being surrounded by a vibrant and supportive
hospitality industry and this support will be described in the Self-Study.

The current concerns for the School include enrollment in both the undergraduate and graduate programs. On the undergraduate level, students often opt for a minor or a certificate in hospitality and select a non-business major avoiding some of the more rigorous required BBA courses. On the graduate level, there are more educational products on the market particularly with online options at competitive prices. These challenges will be addressed more specifically throughout the Self-Study.

The Vision for the School of Hospitality

We are committed to the School’s mission of: “The Cecil B. Day School of Hospitality develops hospitality leaders in a global society.” The vision of the School is to be known globally as a program that produces the most business-savvy, industry-ready individuals for a variety of industry sectors. With this global recognition, would be the distinction of being in the “Top 10” (versus now ranked in the “Top 20”) of hospitality programs in the world.

The School must focus on growing the number of majors in both the undergraduate program and the Masters in Global Hospitality Management Program. In the field of hospitality education, size (number of students) is typically associated with greater industry support which spans not only to recruiting students for career positions but also to external industry funding. Size (number of students) also tends to be a catalyst in attracting and recruiting students on an ongoing basis.

At the present time (fall 2017), the School has 235 majors. The goal is for this number to exceed 500 within the next four years. There are 21 students in the MGHM program. The goal is to exceed 30 students within the next three years and to exceed 40 students within the next five years. For current and future students, the placement of graduates in management positions with competitive salaries is an ongoing goal. The School will continue to grow relationships with top employers for the benefit of career opportunities. These relationships need to encompass more corporate-level opportunities, particularly for the graduate students, and more national and global positions for graduates from both programs.

Quality research productivity for the School must expand by at least 50% over the next three years. Metrics for this goal is the number of publications in top-tier scholarly journals as well as externally funded research and heightened external awareness of faculty expertise through industry and academic awards and recognition. Upward movement for faculty through promotion and tenure is also a goal for all faculty (NTT and incoming TT faculty.) The goal is for this advancement in rank to be accomplished for faculty members within the next five years.

External funding must occur for optimum growth of the School. The goal is for pivotal funding (gifts of $1 million and higher) to be achieved within the next three years. The School has many potential naming opportunities particularly with Georgia State Stadium space. This is an immediate need linked to the growth and improvement of facilities and technological support.

What is needed to accomplish this vision:

- The School of Hospitality must analyze a number of strategies for program growth. To do this effectively, there has to 1) be support from the College and University administration to focus on growing the School of Hospitality and 2) collaboration to study potentially
beneficial options. For example, would a BS degree in Hospitality, reducing the number of some required business core courses taught on the college-level, attract viable students without compromising quality for being industry-ready? Would a different pricing model attract more graduate students resulting in greater profitability?

- The School of Hospitality currently has a disproportionate number of part-time faculty to full-time faculty (5 full-time/12 part-time.). Even the very best part-time faculty cannot provide the vital contributions of research and service to the School. With the service expected of faculty (to help grow the School, provide services to students and expand and maintain industry partnerships,) we are increasingly having to put these responsibilities on staff members or compromise in our comprehensive coverage which then adversely impacts enrollment and career opportunities for students.

- With the issue of faculty lines, is also the emphasis at the college-level of the NTT rank. Recruiting in hospitality education has never been more competitive. The top graduates of Ph.D. programs in hospitality and related fields are not attracted to NTT positions. Faculty who are going to be leaders in research production and quality, resulting in accolades for GSU, have to be in tenure-track positions.

- The School needs expanded state-of-the-art facilities. Teaching a food production lab in a building rife with mechanical and operational problems is not providing a positive learning environment. The lack of facilities is a deterrent to attracting new students. The lab sections have to kept restrictively small with lack of efficiencies in having to schedule multiple sections. Event management is one of the School’s most popular specializations and state-of-the-art equipment is needed to prepare students for top industry positions. The School of Hospitality must be known as providing the most innovative, cutting-edge learning experiences for students preparing them for top industry placements which requires facilities such as those found at aspirational hospitality programs.

- The hospitality industry has been supportive of the School of Hospitality but this level of support can be significantly increased. Tangible support from the College and University will result in more external funding because businesses will see the strong potential – added faculty, students, facilities – for a greater return on their investment. The industry’s top priority is attracting qualified, talented individuals as leaders of the future. There is a direct positive correlation between the industry’s need for future leaders and the success of the School of Hospitality in fulfilling its mission and achieving its vision.