

Academic Programs and Planning (APP) Committee
Feedback and Response Form

Thank you for your submission of the proposal titled Hemp and Cannabis Management.

The APP committee reviewed the proposal on December 14, 2023 and requests the proposal authors use this form to respond to the following questions and or suggestions. Please submit your responses by January 11, 2024 to be considered in the next APP meeting.

Strengths of the Proposal:

Based on the popularity of the minor, students likely will find this attractive.

Weakness of the Proposal:

There is a difference between showing that a particular area of business is experiencing growth and showing that a major in that particular area is a good idea. The proposal does a good job of the former but the majority of the APP remains unconvinced of the latter. Most, though not all, of the requests for clarification below are fundamentally about that difference, and concerns that a degree in such a hyper-focused area of business limits student employment options more than it gives them a competitive advantage in one specific area of business.

Committee Suggestion/Clarification	Author Response
What is the specific market demand for such a degree? Can you provide data? A letter from people in the business is not compelling enough to support this claim. Also, why is such a specialized degree expected in the field? Is there any research to support this claim? Or research to show that a highly specialized degree specific to this field/business would be better than say BS in Business with a Minor in Cannabis Studies?	<p>These are excellent, perceptive comments which are partially difficult to address because cannabis is federally illegal. And as such, employment data is not included in traditional sources. It is also a new industry which means historical data is difficult if not impossible to locate. So, we have to look at the recent data that is available along with job patterns and job demand in other (similar) states; in this case Massachusetts and Michigan were examined. Please review pages 10 to 15 then, as a response to your query.</p> <p>Note too that additional data was issued in mid-December 2023 by the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission. It is provided at the end of this report as NB: First</p>

	<p>Note. It can be found at the end of the report. And again, pages 10 to 15 offers a description of market demand and specific skills needed for this emerging industry.</p> <p>Specific knowledge of and skills directly related to the cannabis industry are expected and valued because our state has unique rules that must be followed and procedures that must be implemented by business professionals. These rules take years to learn and can be the difference between a successful and failed cannabis business.</p> <p>Finally, a BS degree in Management fortified by a minor in Cannabis Studies would be missing key courses such as Hemp and Cannabis Business Economics and Hemp and Cannabis Operational Fundamentals. In addition, our graduates with this degree would be well suited to work in other highly regulated, nuanced industries such as gaming, alcohol and tobacco, and pharmaceuticals.</p>
<p>We are not convinced by the proposal that this merits an entire stand-alone degree. Other institutions offer cannabis certificates, and a concentration in cannabis studies would make more sense to us (or the minor which we already offer). The proposal suggests that Rowan University has a “Cannabis MBA” (p.4) but this means that Rowan offers a master’s of business with a concentration in Cannabis Studies, which is not the same as a Master’s Degree in Cannabis Studies. We understand the proposal is arguing to be the first NJ institution that offers a degree in this field, but don’t see why that would help put Stockton at the forefront of this market. Rowan has invested a lot in this field already, including an institute for students with “a center for Cannabinoid Science & Therapeutics,” “Socio-Behavioral, Security and Law Enforcement Cannabis Center,” and “Center</p>	<p>The note about Rowan’s MBA program having a concentration on cannabis is accurate and will be revised in the proposal. But this points out that we can also characterize (and market) our degree as both a stand alone degree and a Management degree with a focus on cannabis. These are not mutually exclusive.</p> <p>Another interesting note about Rowan is that they are developing a Cannabis Apprenticeship program. Their website states, “The Cannabis Apprenticeship Training Initiative consortium includes the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development (NJDOL), Rowan University, Rowan College of South Jersey, the United Food and Commercial Workers Local 360, the New Jersey State AFL-CIO, the Gloucester County Workforce Development Board, and Loud Wellness, Inc. of Glassboro.”</p>

for Cannabis Workforce Development.” We would hypothesize that other schools, such as William Paterson, are likely doing something similar if the Cannabis market is as competitive as the proposal suggests. Therefore, we are not convinced that we are the leaders in this market nor that a hyper-focused degree in this field would improve our positioning in this market compared to other NJ institutions.

This devotion to a university/government/union/private business partnership points out the need for trained cannabis professionals- something that our degree program can do as well.

Finally, other New Jersey universities are not focused on undergraduate cannabis education like we are. Given our successful first-in-market launch of a cannabis minor and because we have hosted successful events such as career fairs, free quarterly hemp/cannabis education events, and grow hemp on our farm, we have been doing more on the undergraduate level in hemp/cannabis for over 5 years and should continue to do so.

And our Continuing Studies department can continue to be competitive by serving adult learners who want to enter the cannabis market but are not enrolled students. In fact, our Continuing Studies department offers more stand alone hemp/cannabis courses than any other NJ university.

There is a section titled “Sufficient Evidence of Labor Market Demand for the Program” that seems very confusing to me. The jargon used does not help our understanding of the labor market demand or of the proposed major.

It is understandable that if one is not deeply involved in the cannabis market, many of the industry specific terms, rules, and regulations, business requirements and more can sound confusing.

Here are the main takeaways from this section: 1) the NJ cannabis market is less than 2 years old and is one of the fastest growing industries in the state, 2) specific knowledge is required to be successful in this industry, 3) only part of the NJ cannabis market is operating now and other parts of the business (such as distribution, delivery, and the creation of cannabis infused food and beverages) will be introduced soon which will greatly expand our market and business opportunities, and 4) when comparing the nascent NJ cannabis market to MA and MI whose markets are 3 years old similar growth patterns are revealed.

<p>The new jobs that will be created in this field would not all require having a bachelor's degree. What percentage of these jobs would require a bachelor's degree and of those, what percentage would require such a specific degree?</p>	<p>Any professional job in cannabis or in what are called ancillary (or support) industries do require at least a bachelor's degree. A few entry level jobs that do not require a bachelor's degree include: beginning cultivators (growers), trimmers (one who uses scissors to cut leaves off the plant) and budtenders (retail clerks). But budtenders generally need to have at least some cannabis knowledge. Having a degree also puts an employee in line for promotions as is evidenced by many of our graduates who have received promotions. Overall, it is estimated that at least 75% of cannabis and ancillary services employees have at least a bachelor's degree and a specific degree equals a sought after employee.</p>
<p>While three new courses are being developed for the required courses in Hemp and Cannabis Management, with their acronym unspecified and thus unknowable, the other two required courses in this section, all of the 'choose one of the following HMC electives' and both experiential learning required courses are G-courses. 20-28 credits of a degree being G-courses is an abuse of the General Studies curriculum and seems to reinforce the sense that a major in business with a minor in cannabis studies has just as much value for students as this proposed major does.</p>	<p>The Hemp and Cannabis Business Management Degree proposal was constructed to emphasize and embrace the interdisciplinary nature of the degree. While the major could have been envisioned as a strict Business major it would have lacked the interdisciplinary flavor that Stockton's curriculum and degrees are known for. The G courses are an important part of the development of business professionals and we chose to keep this aspect of the curriculum (as it also worked well for the Minor in Cannabis Studies too).</p>
<p>Separate from the inappropriateness of a heavy reliance of G-courses to fulfill major requirements, GEN (not, as written, GNM)1014 - Business and Life, as an elective seems inappropriate for a student majoring in business. They are taking real business courses, a first-year seminar designed for people with no real plans to go into the field should not count towards their major.</p>	<p>Apologies that GEN was written as GNM; this is inexcusable. Given that GEN 1014, Business and Life has been used as an elective for the Minor in Cannabis Studies it made sense to leave it as part of the major. Also, it could be the case that a first-year student who is just exploring business may want to pursue this major after being introduced to the basics. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, "about 80% of students in college end up</p>

	<p>changing their major at least once.” (November 5, 2020)</p>
<p>Is it realistic to think no new faculty lines will be required when there are three new courses being developed and some G-courses may need to transition to business courses, possibly with a G-version of the course also offered for students pursuing the minor? The expertise needed to teach those courses may well already exist at Stockton but those faculty already have full teaching loads. Teaching these courses presumably comes at the expense of teaching the courses they are currently teaching. Those courses will need to be taught by someone else.</p>	<p>There will be no need for new faculty lines to cover these courses. An existing NTPP position is being filled that could cover up to 5 courses and handle the internship program. Then, several very qualified adjunct instructors -with deep hemp and cannabis backgrounds- have already applied based on one LinkedIn appeal. More adjuncts could be easily recruited if needed.</p>

NB: First Note:

Regarding market demand for a Hemp and Cannabis Business Management Degree please see this recently issued report from the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission which provides a summary of how the New Jersey cannabis industry is growing. Of special note is that 337 annual licenses have been awarded and each of these operations (which currently include cultivators, processors, edibles creators, packagers, labs, and cannabis retailers (aka dispensaries) need content specific business management professionals. And as of October 31, 2023, an additional 962 conditional licenses had been granted and all of these businesses are busy trying to convert to an annual license (which means they need municipal approval and properly zoned real estate).

Here is the New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory report which was issued on December 14, 2023:



2023 by the Numbers

NJ-CRC year in review

The New Jersey cannabis industry in 2023 has been transformed by regulatory changes that have paved the way for growth and expansion. The reduction of registration and renewal fees for medicinal cannabis patients and caregivers, the removal of restrictions on vertical integration, the expansion of edible cannabis products, and the elimination of the mandatory waiting period for new ATCs to enter the recreational market have all played crucial roles in shaping the growing industry.

In December the NJ-CRC began accepting applications for wholesale, distribution, and delivery services licenses -- with the first wholesale and distribution licenses being awarded to social equity applicants during the December 7th public meeting. Now that all license classes are open in New Jersey, there are numerous opportunities for aspiring cannabis business entrepreneurs.

Below are some other highlights from 2023 at the NJ-CRC.

NJ-CRC

By the Numbers

2023 year-in-review



Up to

112,850

Patients served in the Medicinal Cannabis Program

Number of dispensaries opened

48



\$29,418,236

Recreational Cannabis Sales Tax Collected

As of September 2023

Annual Licenses Awarded



337

Application cures resolved

270+



Enrolled Caregivers

5,352



\$2,025,595

SEEF Collected

As of September 2023

Social Equity reports submitted

71

Healthcare Providers enrolled

1540

Public Meetings, Hearings & Webinars

18



Woman-owned dispensaries opened

34



On-site Inspections

300+

Extensions granted

819

Social media posts

590+

In 2024, we anticipate significant developments in medicinal and adult cannabis spaces. The completion of clinical registrant regulations is expected to advance cannabis research for medicinal purposes – a meaningful step forward for all cannabis consumers. We will also see the complete [elimination of fees](#) for medicinal cannabis patients with the introduction of digital ID cards. The waivers granted to manufacturers to expand edibles products will become permanent regulation during the year.

Rules for consumption areas in the adult-use, recreational cannabis space will be adopted in 2024. These consumption areas will be connected to dispensaries and will offer social gathering opportunities for cannabis smokers. The consumption areas offer a vital solution for individuals needing a suitable place to consume outside their homes. These venues are designed to provide a safe and controlled environment for responsible use of cannabis. Read more about consumption areas [here](#).