January 30, 2026

Rami Zwick, Associate Dean for Graduate Programs & Professor of Marketing
School of Business

**RE:    Proposed Master of Science in Data-Driven Marketing & AI Application (MSDM-AA)-SSGDP**

Dear Rami,

Executive Council discussed the subject proposal and corresponding committee feedback during the January 26, 2026 meeting.  Executive Council had no additional comments to include with the significant and important feedback provided by tasked committees.  These comments are attached for consideration of a revision.

Should a revision be drafted for further deliberation about the proposed program, please submit it to my attention with [New Business] in the subject line.  I note that some proponents find it helpful to include an executive summary that speaks to changes made to the proposal, as well as responses to feedback from the Senate review round.

Best regards,

Ken Barish, Chair
Academic Senate

Cc:     Jerayr Haleblian, BUS FEC Chair
        Senate Director Cortez

Enclosures:
Committee Feedback
Proposal Documents

**COMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION**

January 8, 2026

To:         Kenneth Barish, Chair
            Riverside Division Academic Senate

From:       Esra Kurum, Chair
            Committee on Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

**Re:        [Campus Review] (Proposal) Master of Science in Data-Driven Marketing &
            AI Application (MSDM-AA)-SSGDP**

The Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (CODEI) has reviewed the above proposal for the (MSDM-AA)-SSGDP. From a DEI perspective, the proposal raises no major concerns and includes several positive equity-oriented elements, including holistic admissions practices, a built-in return-to-aid commitment, and a clear focus on serving students in the Inland Empire.

Given that this is a self-supporting professional degree, the committee recognizes that access will necessarily be shaped by cost; within those constraints, the proposal makes reasonable efforts to support inclusion through admissions review, financial aid allocation, and regional access. At the same time, DEI considerations are largely implicit rather than explicitly integrated into program design. The committee wishes to encourage the proposers to further articulate how diversity, equity, and inclusion will be operationalized in admissions outreach, student support, and curriculum particularly with respect to responsible use, ethical considerations and implications of AI within curriculum. This end may be aided via interdepartmental support regarding data science ethics and courses such as those offered by the Computer Science and Engineering, or Statistics departments. Barring these points, no major DEI concerns are identified within the proposal.

**UC RIVERSIDE**                    *Academic Senate*

**GRADUATE COUNCIL**

December 16, 2025


To:     Kenneth Barish, Chair
        Riverside Division

From:   Viji Santhakumar, Chair
        Graduate Council


**RE:    [Campus Review] (Proposal) Master of Science in Data-Driven Marketing & AI
        Application (MSDM-AA)-SSGDP**


Graduate Council reviewed and discussed the proposal for a new self-supporting MS in Data-Driven Marketing and AI Application at their December 11, 2025 meeting. The Council noted that the participating faculty listed in the proposal are not from STEM fields and do not have expertise in AI -- who will be teaching the program's courses? Additionally, none of the required core courses involve AI and the program does not contain a fundamental AI course. The AI and STEM rigor is non-existent. The Council would like to know what makes this degree a Master of Science -- a one quarter capstone project seems to dilute what an MS is. Regarding the budget, there is a list of full-time faculty and a list of existing courses with a budget that includes the cost and revenue the program will generate. It appears the program will not cost anything because the school plans to use existing faculty. The Council would like more details on the cost of instruction. The figure of $315,000 was presented in the proposal which should be broken down with what the program projects to lose in year 1, year 2, year 3, etc. The financial projection as presented is inadequate.

December 17, 2025

To:     Kenneth Barish, Chair
        Riverside Division

From:  Joseph Genereux, Chair
        Committee on Library and Scholarly Communications

Re: 25-26. CR. Proposal: Master of Science in Data-Driven Marketing & AI Application (MSDM-AA)-SSGDP
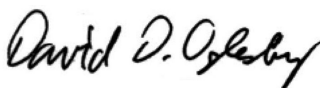

The committee endorses the proposed Master of Science in Data-Driven Marketing & AI Application (MSDM-AA) program, which is well-planned and fills an important and inadequately met need for the Inland Empire and the State of California. We appreciate that the proposal recognizes the importance of the libraries' digital infrastructure and other resources for the program. The proposal  should also acknowledge the likely contributions of the library staff to curricular development of the new electives, especially in consideration of the library's strong and rapidly expanding subject matter expertise in the application and ethics of emerging AI technologies. Related to that point, we would like to call the attention of the team behind the proposal to the libraries' plan to offer for-credit workshops on AI in the future, which might also serve as electives for the program.

**PLANNING AND BUDGET**

January 9, 2026

To:     Kenneth Barish, Chair
        Riverside Division

From:   David Oglesby, Chair
        Committee on Planning and Budget

Re:     **[Campus Review] Proposal:** *Master of Science in Data-Driven Marketing & AI Application (MSDM-AA)-SSGDP*

The Committee on Planning and Budget (CPB) reviewed the proposal for a Master of Science in Data-Driven Marketing & AI Application (MSDM-AA) self-supporting graduate professional degree program. CPB has the following comments:

1.  "AI" in the Title vs. Curriculum:

    *   Concern was raised that the core courses didn't appear heavily AI-driven, with AI content seemingly concentrated in elective courses.

    *   The previous concern led to a worry about the name being slightly misleading ("bait and switch") if students default to a non-AI path; though it was noted the name is good for marketing.

    *   A suggestion was made to require more explicit detail on how AI will be integrated into the bulk of the curriculum.

2.  Program Justification (Standalone vs. Track):

    *   A major question was why a completely new MS degree is necessary instead of simply creating a specialized track within the existing marketing degree.

    *   CPB members agreed the proposers need to provide a clear, explicit justification for a standalone degree.

3.  Potential Cannibalization:

    *   There is a concern that the new program might cannibalize students from the existing state-supported majors (e.g., the traditional marketing major).

- The proposal alludes to a distinct, younger market but does not explicitly address the risk of cannibalization.

4.   Fiscal Impact on Other Departments:

- The proposal mentions students taking classes in other departments (state-supported classes). This raises questions about reimbursement/credit sharing agreements and the potential for hidden costs (e.g., forcing other departments to open new sections).

- It was noted that letters of agreement from relevant department chairs might be needed to ensure capacity.

5.   "Soft Landing" for PhD Students:

- The program is presented as a "soft landing" option for PhD students who do not finish their doctoral program.

- The document lacks an explanation of the financial logistics for these students—specifically, how they would be charged (e.g., a la carte for remaining courses versus paying the full program freight).

**[Campus Review] Master of Science in Data-Driven Marketing & AI Application (MSDM-AA)-SSGDP**

Please review the attached proposal for a Master of Science in Data-Driven Marketing & AI Application (MSDM-AA) self-supporting graduate professional degree program. The proposal documents are [here](here).

Please provide your response via IMS or senate@ucr.edu (cc cherysac@ucr.edu) **by January 14, 2026**. Thank you.