



**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Faculty Senate

FROM: T. Chris Riley-Tillman, Provost and Executive Vice President

SUBJECT: Proposal to Create MS in Food Manufacturing Technology

DATE: March 10, 2025

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The Provost's Office and its internal review committee have reviewed the attached proposal from the College of Agricultural, Human, and Natural Resources Sciences to create a Master of Science (MS) in Food Manufacturing Technology on WSU Global.

This proposed online MS program aims to equip students with expertise in advanced technologies, packaging materials, digital tools, and management practices to support sustainable food systems in the U.S. and globally. The program is designed to address the evolving needs of the food manufacturing industry—one of the largest sectors of the U.S. economy—where ongoing innovation and efficiency are essential. Industry stakeholders have expressed strong support for this degree, as reflected in the letters included as addendums.

The Provost's Office and its internal review committee have carefully reviewed the proposal, and the following feedback was conveyed.

- Enrollment forecasting may be challenging. The proposal relies heavily on international partnerships, a relatively new approach for sustaining a self-funded graduate program at WSU. Additionally, current graduate enrollment trends do not align with the optimistic projections outlined in the proposal.
- Clear program differentiation is essential. While the proposed MS program and the existing Food Science Management program have distinct scopes, their similarities may cause confusion. A focused marketing and promotional strategy will be necessary to distinguish the new degree.

We judge the proposal ready for the Senate review process.