

**New Program Proposal
Associate Degree in Applied Science
Major in Diversified Agriculture
Piedmont Technical College**

Summary

Piedmont Technical College requests approval to offer a program leading to the Associate in Applied Science degree with a major in Diversified Agriculture to be implemented Fall 2011. The proposed program is to be offered through traditional instruction methods and existing distance education formats.

The Program Planning Summary was submitted to the Commission on November 11, 2010, and reviewed and voted upon favorably without substantive comment by the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP) on January 20, 2011. The State Technical College System's Board approved the final proposal on January 25, 2011. The final proposal was received by the Commission on February 10, 2011.

According to the proposal, the purpose of the program is to prepare graduates of the associate degree program with the education and skills necessary to acquire upper-level operator and management positions in the diverse field of agriculture. The institution notes that there is a strong demand for well-prepared diversified agriculturalists based largely on prospect of more family farms becoming corporate entities. The Bureau of Labor Statistics 2010-2011 *Occupational Outlook Handbook* estimates that skilled farm managers' salaries' can average over \$45,000 a year, which is higher than the national average. An institutional survey of ten agriculture-related local businesses in the college's service area has determined the need for the program. Based upon the survey, it is estimated that in the first three years of the program's operation, 114 full-time positions will be available in the College's service region. In that same three year period a total of 40 part-time positions are expected to be available.

Currently, there are no associate degree programs of this type in the South Carolina Technical College System. Piedmont Technical College offers two certificate programs in Diversified Agriculture. Three other South Carolina technical colleges offer similar degree or certificate programs in Horticulture or Sustainable Agriculture. The programs are located at Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College, Horry Georgetown Technical College, and Spartanburg Community College. All of the programs meet the current productivity standards for enrollment and graduation rates.

Enrollment in the proposed program is estimated to begin at 18 students (20 FTE) in 2011-2012, the first full year of the program, and increase to 31 students (33.8 FTE) in 2012-2013, and to 31 students (33.8 FTE) in 2013-2014. If enrollment projections are met, the program will meet the current CHE program productivity standards for enrollment.

According to the proposal, the Diversified Agriculture program will require 70 credit hours of academic coursework. The proposed program is an expansion of the Basic Diversified Agriculture and Advanced Diversified Agriculture certificate programs currently offered at Piedmont Technical College. All courses listed in the proposed program are currently in the statewide catalog of approved courses and will be added to the college's new catalog.

The proposal states that the assessment of student learning will be tied to the specific goals and objectives of the proposed program. The proposed program assessment will use direct

and indirect methods which will include a written exams, hands-on laboratory projects, written reports, cooperative work experience, and classroom participation.

The proposal states that two new faculty will be hired to support the program. However, staff consulted with the institution and determined that there were, in fact, to be no new hires. The current program coordinator will be a full-time instructor for the program. One existing instructor and one adjunct instructor will also provide instruction and support. No new administration will be hired and the administrative assistant for the Engineering & Industrial division will provide program support.

The proposal states that no physical plant needs are anticipated to support the proposed program. The program will be housed in a campus facility which has classroom space, a workshop, and a fifteen-acre lab. Additional classes will be taught either through distance education or at the institution. Piedmont Technical College has received a \$247,000 grant from AdvanceSC to support the program, of which \$188,725 has been allocated for equipment cost. The grant will be used to purchase student computers and agriculture equipment such as, a John Deere tractor, a disc/harrow, a rotary cutting mower with seed spreader, a chisel plow, a PTO tiller, and a sprayer system.

According to the proposal the library holdings will need to be updated. Piedmont Technical College anticipates spending a total of \$2,400 for the first three years of the program's implementation to purchase library materials to support this program in Diversified Agriculture. The institution's library provides print and electronic resources, Interlibrary Loan, Internet access, bibliographic instruction, reference books and a variety of class-specific user education programs, library catalog and on-line resources.

The proposed program is designed as a terminal degree. The College is currently working on developing articulation and transfer agreements with Clemson University and Abraham Baldwin Agriculture College in Tifton, Georgia. Piedmont Technical College has also, applied for a U.S. Department of Agriculture grant in collaboration with Abraham Baldwin Agriculture College, which will assist both schools in creating seamless transfer and articulation processes for students majoring in Diversified Agriculture. According to the proposal, there are no licensure requirements for the Diversified Agriculture program and the College does not plan to seek accreditation for the program within its first three years.

Costs and sources of financing identified by the institution for the proposed program are shown below.

ESTIMATED COSTS BY YEAR				
CATEGORY	1st	2nd	3rd	TOTALS
Program Administration	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Faculty Salaries	\$65,000	\$66,000	\$66,560	\$197,560
Graduate Assistants	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Clerical/Support Personnel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Supplies and Materials	\$10,825	\$10,825	\$10,825	\$32,475
Library Resources	\$800	\$800	\$800	\$2,400
Equipment	\$34,575	\$84,575	\$69,575	\$188,725
Facilities	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other (Identify)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTALS	\$111,200	\$162,200	\$147,760	\$421,160
SOURCES OF REVENUE				
Tuition Funding	\$38,208	\$63,680	\$63,680	\$165,568
Program Specific Fees	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
State Funding	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Reallocation of Existing Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funding	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Funding (Grant funds from Perkins and AdvanceSC)	\$100,000	\$120,000	\$127,000	\$347,000
TOTALS	\$138,208	\$183,680	\$190,680	\$512,568

These data demonstrate that if Piedmont Technical College can meet the projected student enrollments and contain costs as they are shown in the proposal, the program will be able to cover new costs with revenues it generates by the first year of its implementation.

In summary, Piedmont Technical College is proposing a program leading to the Associate in Applied Science degree with a major in Diversified Agriculture. Graduates of the program will be prepared to meet the growing demand for well-prepared upper-level operators and managers in the diverse field of agriculture in the college's service area.

Recommendation

The staff recommends that the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing commend favorably to the Commission the program leading to the Associate in Applied Science degree with a major in Diversified Agriculture, to be implemented in Fall 2011, provided that no “unique cost” or other special state funding be required or requested.