

**New Program Proposal
Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies
USC-Beaufort**

To be offered at Historic Beaufort Campus and Hilton Head Gateway Campus

USC-Beaufort requests approval to offer a program leading to the Bachelor of Arts in Communication Studies to be implemented in Spring 2012.

The Program Planning Summary was submitted to the Commission on November 1, 2010, and reviewed and voted upon favorably without substantive comment by the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP) on January 20, 2011. The University of South Carolina Board of Trustees approved the proposal on June 30, 2011. The full proposal was received by the Commission on August 15, 2011.

According to the proposal, the purpose of the program is to provide students with a focus in communication contexts (interpersonal, group, mass, and public), and in the history and scholarship of the communication studies discipline. Graduates of the proposed program will be prepared for professional careers related to communication and to continue their studies in graduate programs in communication studies. According to the proposal, there has been an increase of 63% of undergraduate degrees conferred in communication over the last 10 years. In addition, data collected from the Occupational Supply Demand System (OSDS) website indicate occupations related to communications/journalism/broadcasting are expected to grow nationally by 5.5% from 2008-2018. The proposal states that the projected average number of annual openings in South Carolina for occupations within communications/journalism/broadcasting is 108.

According to the proposal, results from an interest survey conducted with students at USC-Beaufort between Fall 2009 and Spring 2011 indicated that of 425 students polled, 111 desired a communication studies major and 85 were considering a communication major. USC-Beaufort began offering a minor in communication studies in Spring 2011 by offering two courses and both courses were filled. In addition, USC-Beaufort surveyed 40 businesses in Beaufort, Bluffton, Hilton Head Island, and Savannah, GA and 35 businesses responded there was a need for graduates with a degree in communications and the available jobs ranged from customer service representatives to directors of communication.

The proposal states that there are over 50 degrees offered in colleges and universities in the state of South Carolina in the field of communications. The *Program Inventory of Programs available at South Carolina Higher Education Institutions* shows six state institutions (Coastal Carolina, College of Charleston, South Carolina State, USC-Aiken, and USC-Upstate) and seven independent institutions (Anderson, Bob Jones, Claflin, Coker, Columbia College, Columbia International, Furman, Newberry, and Southern Wesleyan) with undergraduate degrees in the field of communications. Additional undergraduate degree programs in specific areas of communications exist at other institutions in South Carolina institutions. Currently, there are no institutions within 70 miles from USC-Beaufort that offer a degree in communication studies. According to the proposal, the proposed degree in communication studies would be more attractive to students in the USC-Beaufort region.

The institution anticipates there will be 15 new students (16.4 FTE) in the program's first year, increasing to 16 students (17.4 FTE) in the second year, 17 students (18.6 FTE) in the third year, 18 students (19.6 FTE) in the fourth year, and further increasing to 19 students (20.8 FTE)

in the fifth year of the program. If enrollment and program completion projections are met, the proposed program will meet the Commission's productivity standards. According to the proposal, these estimates are based on the number of students who indicated an interest in a Communication Studies major on the student survey, the growth of the Communication Studies nationally, and the increased yearly enrollment at USC-Beaufort.

Admission to the proposed program will require an earned 2.0 cumulative GPA on the defined preparatory units and score 800 on the SAT or 17 on the ACT to be admitted into USC-Beaufort. There are no admissions criteria specific to the proposed program. The curriculum for the proposed program in Communication Studies will consist of a total of 120 credit hours. The proposed program includes 38-49 credit hours in general education, 15-18 credit hours in program requirements (history, humanities, social/behavioral studies, 33 credit hours in the communications major, and 17-28 credit hours in electives. Six new courses will be added to the institution's catalog. The focus of the new courses will be communication studies (Communication, Technology and Society; Introduction to Communication Theory and Research; Communication and Popular Culture; Health Communication; Communication and the Law; and Capstone Course).

The proposed program's assessment plan consists of eight knowledge student learning outcomes, 13 performance student learning outcomes, and three value student learning outcomes. According to the proposal, direct assessment methods will include course examinations, oral and written critiques of presentations, critiques of communication scholarship, communication research papers, and grading rubrics. Indirect assessment methods will include the rising junior survey, graduating student survey, and the alumni survey.

Faculty for the proposed program will be drawn from existing faculty currently teaching in the in the undergraduate minor program in communication studies. Currently, four faculty members (2.265 FTE) are on staff in the communication program and will deliver coursework in the proposed program. According to the proposal, as the program grows, a part-time adjunct faculty member will be hired until the program necessitates hiring a full-time faculty member. Newly hired, tenure-track, full-time faculty will have a Ph.D. in Communication.

The proposal states that no new space or facilities are needed for the proposed program. The proposal further states that the program will utilize classrooms on both campuses and these facilities are adequate for the first five years of the proposed program. According to the proposal, two analyses were performed comparing the *Resources for College Libraries (RCL)* to the library collection currently at USC-Beaufort. The results of this comparison showed that USC-Beaufort only had 7.56% of the RCL recommended titles in the area of Communication Studies. The current annual budget for library materials at USC-Beaufort is slightly over \$200,000. However, the amount budgeted in the area of communications is \$2,000. This budgeted amount will allow USC-Beaufort to add approximately 22 books per year to support the proposed program. Additionally, the proposal notes that once Communication Studies becomes a major degree program, the annual budget for materials will be increased to \$8,000 per year.

There is no specialized accreditation for the proposed program. Licensure is not required for employment.

The proposal states that the Technical College System, including the neighboring Technical College of the Lowcountry (TCL) currently offers an A.A. transfer block for Art, Humanities and Social Sciences consisting of a curriculum block of 46-48 semester hours. USC-

Beaufort has already established the PASSPORT program with the TCL to plan for optimal transition of TCL graduates into USC-Beaufort. The Executive Vice-Chancellor of Academic Affairs is currently working with TCL on an articulation agreement to build a path for graduates of TCL to gain entrance to USC-Beaufort.

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

ESTIMATED COSTS BY YEAR						
CATEGORY	1ST	2ND	3RD	4TH	5TH	TOTALS
Program Administration	0	0	0	0	0	0
Faculty Salaries (Not new costs. Current costs)	196,074	196,074	196,074	196,074	196,074	980,370
Graduate Students	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Clerical/Support Personnel	0	0	0	0	0	0
Supplies and Materials	1,000	3,000	1,000	3,000	1,500	9,500
Library Resources	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000	40,000
Equipment	0	0	0	0	0	0
Facilities	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other (Identify)	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTALS	205,074	207,074	205,074	207,074	205,574	1,029,870
SOURCES OF FINANCING BY YEAR						
Tuition Funding	\$111,708	\$118,278	\$126,612	\$133,272	\$141,606	\$631,476
Program-Specific Fees State Funding	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Reallocation of Existing Funds*	0	0	0	0	0	0
Federal Funding	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other Funding (specify)*	93,363	93,363	93,363	93,363	93,363	\$466,815
TOTALS	\$205,071	\$211,641	\$219,975	\$226,635	\$234,969	\$1,098,291

***Other Funding (specify)**

This program will be supported by funding from the Beaufort Jasper Higher Education Commission (BJHEC), and is directly related to the USCB Strategic Plan to strengthen and develop academic programs for local access to higher education.

According to the information provided by the institution, the proposed program will be able to cover costs beginning in the first year and thereafter.

In summary, USC-Beaufort proposes to offer a program leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication Studies on both the Historic Beaufort and Hilton Head Gateway campuses of USC-Beaufort. The proposed program will provide graduates with the skills necessary to be successful in the local job market in several areas of communication. This proposed program is needed given the expected increase in demand for graduates in communication based on national data and local surveys with the business community.

Recommendation

The staff recommends that the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing commend favorably to the Commission the program leading to the Bachelors of Arts degree in Communication Studies at USC-Beaufort, to be implemented in Spring 2012, provided that no “unique cost” or other special state funding be required or requested.