

**New Program Proposal
Bachelor of Professional Studies
College of Charleston**

The College of Charleston requests approval to offer a new program leading to the Bachelor of Professional Studies to be implemented in Spring 2013. The proposed program is to be offered through blended instruction methods on the College of Charleston campus and through hybrid and online courses.

The Program Planning Summary was submitted to the Commission in November 2011 and reviewed and voted upon favorably by the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP) on January 19, 2012. The College of Charleston Board of Trustees approved the proposal on April 20, 2012. The full proposal was received by the Commission on May 15, 2012.

According to the proposal, the purpose of the program is to provide an undergraduate education to adult learners (defined as 24 years or older) with a minimum of a completed Associate degree from an accredited institution or 60 college credits. The degree includes two primary study foci: “Organizational Leadership and Management” and “Communication and Information Systems.” The institution states that the degree is specifically designed to increase the number of college graduates in the state, especially the Lowcountry.

Presently, no South Carolina public institution of higher education offers an undergraduate Bachelor of Professional Studies degree—although a number of public and private institutions offer adult completion degrees, General Studies undergraduate degrees, and Interdisciplinary Studies undergraduate degrees, including Francis Marion University, Bob Jones University, Furman University, Southern Wesleyan University, Benedict College, Columbia International University, North Greenville University, and multiple University of South Carolina campuses. However, all of the programs mentioned above use a separate CIP code. CHE staff is aware of no private institutions in South Carolina which offer the specific proposed degree, and was able to identify several well-established institutions in the country which offer the program, including the University of Wisconsin system.

The proposal cites the critical need to increase the number of degree-holding individuals in the South Carolina workforce in order to increase the state’s economic development prospects, as emphasized in the Commission on Higher Education Action Plan. The proposal points out that by 2016, 60% of all jobs in the nation will require a postsecondary education, and that only 34% of South Carolina adults currently have attained a postsecondary degree. The institution notes that it hosted focus groups and open house events to promote the prospect of the proposed degree, which met with success. The institution cites a survey conducted by a nearby technical college which states that 86% of students who completed transfer programs “intend to continue their education at another institution.” The proposal also cites indirect support for such a program by such local economic development groups as the Charleston Regional Development Alliance and Opportunity Next.

According to the proposal, the proposed program will consist of 122 credit hours of course work: “the degree completion program requires 62 credits with a minimum of 35 credits that must be completed in residence.” The proposal describes residence course requirements in five core competencies: six to seven course credit hours in oral and written communication; nine credit hours in humanities and fine arts; six credit hours in social and behavioral sciences; eight credit hours in natural science (both lecture/lab courses); and six to seven course credits in mathematics. Other required courses include an four-credit, orientation transition seminar

entitled “The Ethics of 21st Century Living”; a series of three four-credit liberal arts seminar courses; plus a 30-credit hour concentration in “Organizational Leadership and Management” (courses in economics, management, psychology, and sociology) or “Communication and Information Systems” (courses in English, computer science, applied communication management, information systems, psychology and sociology); and, finally, a four-credit capstone course. The proposal identifies 12 new proposed courses designed specifically for the proposed program; 11 of these courses are 300-level and above; the 200-level course is an information science course in database security.

Because the proposed degree is a continuation learning degree, the institution will require previous postsecondary credit for admission, including minimally a completed Associate degree from an accredited institution or 60 transferable college credits with a 2.6 cumulative GPA. A non-credit requirement for admission is that the enrollee be a minimum age of 24.

The proposed program is not eligible for special accreditation.

The proposal anticipates there will be 60 new students (14.5 FTE) in the program’s first year (just the spring and summer semesters), increasing to 100 new students (70 FTE) in the second year, and 120 new students (90 FTE) in the third year and beyond. If enrollment and program completion projections are met, the proposed program will meet the Commission’s productivity standards. The proposal does note, however, that “it is difficult to predict actual enrollments and rate of progress ... Students may shift from full-time to part-time to full-time status over the course of fall, spring and summer session.”

The program proposal indicates that no new administration personnel will be hired specifically for this program, and states that the new Dean of the College of Charleston North Campus (appointed July 1, 2012) will serve as the program administrator. The institution has informed CHE staff that seven current faculty members, including adjunct faculty, will be reallocated temporarily or a long-term basis to serve the program; by the third year of the program, the institution anticipates that a total of 4.5 FTE faculty will be assigned to cover all program courses. The institution also anticipates the hiring of four new staff members (three in the first year, one in the second year).

The proposal identifies no special library budget increases and states that holdings in the institution’s libraries, plus additional resources provided by PASCAL, are sufficient to meet the program’s information needs. The proposal indicates no new physical plant or equipment costs will be required, and states that the institution’s Charleston North Campus will provide all necessary facility requirements.

New costs and sources of financing identified by the institution for the proposed program are shown below:

Estimated Costs by Year						
Category	1st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	Totals
Faculty Salaries	\$59,280	\$201,680	\$229,560	\$229,560	\$229,560	\$949,640
Graduate Assistants	\$12,400	\$12,400	\$12,400	\$12,400	\$12,400	\$62,000
Clerical/Support Personnel (existing)	\$61,188	\$61,188	\$61,188	\$61,188	\$61,188	\$305,941
Clerical/Support Personnel (new)	\$70,200	\$117,000	\$187,200	\$187,200	\$187,200	\$748,800
Supplies and Materials	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$25,000
Library Resources	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$15,000
Equipment	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$25,000
Other (Operating and Marketing)	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$500,000
TOTALS	\$387,568	\$576,768	\$674,848	\$674,848	\$674,848	\$2,988,880
Sources of Financing by Year						
Estimated FTE Revenue (see comment below)	\$198,137	\$709,412	\$950,012	\$950,012	\$950,012	\$3,757,584
Reallocation of Existing Funds (Program Administration, clerical support)	\$132,688	\$132,688	\$132,688	\$132,688	\$132,688	\$663,441
TOTALS	\$330,825	\$842,100	\$1,082,700	\$1,082,700	\$1,082,700	\$4,421,025

As demonstrated in the chart above, College of Charleston will meet new costs of the program through estimated FTE revenue and the reallocation of existing funds within the institution.

In summary, College of Charleston is proposing a program leading to the Bachelor of Professional Studies. Designed to provide postsecondary education opportunities to adult learners and to recruit underserved populations in the area, the program, if it meets the institution's enrollment goals, is likely to contribute to a marked increase of the number of undergraduate degree holders in the Lowcountry. According to the proposal, the proposed degree, which can be considered unique to the state, will also provide improved access to the College of Charleston and a highly flexible schedule with multiple modes of delivery.

Recommendation

The Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing commends favorably to the Commission approval of the program leading to a Bachelor of Professional Studies at College of Charleston, to be implemented in Spring 2013, provided that no "unique cost" or other special state funding be required or requested.