

**New Program Proposal
B.A. in Communications
with Concentrations in Journalism and Broadcasting
South Carolina State University**

Summary

South Carolina State University requests approval to offer a program leading to the Bachelor of Arts in Communications with concentrations in Journalism and Broadcasting to be implemented in Fall 2009. The proposal also states that the University plans to begin a third concentration in Public Communications in Fall 2013.

The proposal was approved by South Carolina State University's Board of Trustees on June 5, 2008. It was submitted to the Commission on Higher Education for review initially on August 21, 2008. Subsequently, the proposal was revised and resubmitted to the Commission on January 12, 2009, to address questions from the staff about the original proposal. The proposal was reviewed by the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing on February 5, 2009.

The purpose of this program is to prepare students for employment opportunities in the increasingly diverse field of Communications. In keeping with this purpose, the proposed baccalaureate degree in Communications will have three tracks (Journalism, Broadcasting, and eventually Public Communications) to prepare students for different areas of employment. This degree program grows out of existing minors in Journalism and Broadcasting which currently have sufficient enrollments to suggest that the new major would be well supported in terms of enrollments. The objectives of this program and its tracks are:

1. to redress the shortage of minorities in Journalism, Broadcasting, and Public Communications nationally and in the state of South Carolina;
2. to increase enrollment, retention, and graduation rates in the Department of English and Modern Languages with the digital technology-based professional mass media job-oriented courses;
3. to aid students in making well-informed career choices; and
4. to increase the University's academic reputation by earning accreditation from the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) and gaining national recognition through the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (AEJMC), the Broadcast Education Association (BEA), and the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA).

The proposal states that the need for this program is evidenced by the many South Carolina State University students who have expressed a desire to major in Communications. According to the proposal, of the 20 students in other majors who are currently taking Journalism and Broadcasting as their minors, 16 expressed a desire to major in Communications. Additionally, an informal survey conducted among freshmen and sophomores found more than 50 students interested in majoring in Communications. In addition, the proposal states that the Department of English and Modern Languages, through which this program will be administered, has a recruitment committee that visits high schools, technical colleges, and other venues set up by the University Recruitment Team. Similarly, the University developed the *Communications Major Recruitment and Enrollment Plan* that identifies several strategies to recruit students for this proposed program.

The proposal also states that data on the underrepresentation of minority professionals in the communications industry demonstrates the need for the program. For example, the proposal cites the current 13% minority employment in the newspaper industry (11% for African-Americans) as significantly below the percentage needed to accomplish the parity goal set by the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) given the 31.7% minority population of the United States. Similarly, less than 15% of the specialists and staff employed in the field of public relations at the national level are minorities.

Eight public colleges and universities and thirteen independent institutions in South Carolina offer a major in Communications. Of these public institutions two (USC-Columbia and Winthrop University) have accredited programs in this area. None of the independent colleges and universities in the state is accredited by this body. The proposal notes also that only two of the public institutions are geographically near South Carolina State University and that the enrollment of minority students in Communications in these other public universities is small. According to the proposal, the percentage of black students enrolled in Communications programs at USC-Columbia is 9.7% (136 out of 1401 enrolled) while the College of Charleston's is 5.3% (35 out of 678 enrolled). The proposal also notes that Claflin University, also located in Orangeburg, has a successful Communications program in which the Fall 2007 headcount enrollment was 102. South Carolina State University has an articulation agreement with Claflin University so that its students can take one course per semester at that institution. The agreement permits interested students to take one course per semester in Communications. The proposal indicates that 12 courses at Claflin University could be used to fulfill South Carolina State University requirements for this program. As the only state-supported, four-year Historically Black College or University in South Carolina, South Carolina State University will serve minorities through its Communications major in preparing them for the various Communications areas, especially given that the proposed Communications major

includes concentrations in Journalism, Broadcasting, and eventually Public Communications.

Projected enrollment for the proposed program is 15 students in the first year, increasing to 20 in the second, 25 in the third, 30 in the fourth, and 40 in the fifth year of the program's implementation. Ten to twelve graduates are anticipated at the end of the first five-year period with 50-60 students in the pipeline. If estimated enrollments and completions are achieved as projected, the program will meet the Commission on Higher Education's program productivity requirements.

The curriculum for each of the two currently requested tracks of the proposed program (and the Public Communications track which will be requested at a later date) will consist of a minimum of 123 semester hours. For both current tracks, this curriculum includes 48 hours in general education requirements; nine hours in professional English courses; 15 hours in major core courses; 27 hours in major concentration courses; 18 hours of Communications/Liberal Arts electives; and six hours in a practicum or internship.

The Public Communications concentration is anticipated to be implemented in Fall 2013 by notification to the Commission when the appropriate faculty have been hired. To offer all three tracks will require a total of 23 new courses added to the University catalogue during the program's first five years. These new offerings include courses in Journalism (seven), Broadcasting (nine), and Public Communications (seven).

No accreditation, approval, licensing or certification is required for this program. However, South Carolina State University will pursue accreditation by the Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) in seven to ten years in an effort to promote the University's academic reputation. At the meeting of the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing on February 5, 2009, Dr. Shafiqur Rahman, who will direct this program, explained that accreditation takes so long because it encompasses work experience as well as graduates. In addition, ACEJMC, requires that Journalism and Mass Communications units be autonomous from other departments (i.e., a separate school or college), a structural condition that may or may not be feasible or desirable given other resource needs at the University.

According to the proposal, South Carolina State University is eager to collaborate with other institutions and programs in developing this program. The University has articulation agreements with Claflin University and Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College. The proposal states the University also has a Community Higher Education Cross Registration Program Agreement with Claflin

University and Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College so that students enrolled in any of the three institutions can take one course per semester at one of the other institutions. In addition, for this proposed program, the new “Gateway Program” between South Carolina State University and Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College will allow Communications majors to take courses at South Carolina State University before they graduate with an Associate’s degree from Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College and enter South Carolina State University as juniors. According to the proposal, with the Gateway Program, students enrolled at Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College will be able to take five courses at South Carolina State University in the Communications program (JOUR 201, JOUR 310, BC 201, JOUR 220 and JOUR 212), which are offered in the freshman and sophomore years of the Communications program. As such, the Gateway Program would allow students enrolled at Orangeburg-Calhoun Technical College to transfer to South Carolina State University seamlessly.

Faculty for the proposed program will be drawn from the faculty who teach in the existing minor program of study in Communications. The original proposal stated that the program will require twelve full-time faculty members (12 FTE); thus, the University would need to hire an additional ten new faculty members (10 FTE). Given the state’s current financial situation, staff inquired if South Carolina State University would experience difficulty in funding so many new faculty. The University responded to this inquiry regarding its new faculty needs by revising new faculty needs to hire only six new tenure-track professors (6 FTE). Currently, one full-time professor (0.50 FTE)¹ and one full-time instructor (1 FTE) are on staff. In the first year of the program, two new full-time faculty members will be hired to teach in the program. Two full-time faculty members will also be hired to teach in the new program in the second and third years of the program’s operation. By the fifth year of the program, there will be eight full-time faculty members (7.50 FTE), whose positions are anticipated to be funded through a Title III grant.

No new space or facilities are needed for this proposed program. The proposal states that the Department of English and Modern Languages has sufficient office space and classrooms to accommodate the proposed program. The proposal also notes that the use of a large room in Turner Hall has been approved for an electronic newsroom lab for the proposed program’s concentrations in Journalism and Public Communications. The Radio Broadcasting students will use the 80,000 Watt high-powered South Carolina State University public radio station, WSSB-FM, for their radio production, post-production, editing, broadcasting, and broadcast management courses.

¹ The full-time professor is also the journalism coordinator and would initially continue in that role.

According to the proposal, the program will require \$2,244 for library resources in each of the first four years and \$4,080 for library resources the fifth year. The proposal indicated that 67% of the current collection is outdated. Thus, while the program will use University funds to purchase \$2,244 for library resources in each of the first four years of the program and \$4,080 for library resources in the fifth year, additional financial resources through the Title III grant will be used to supplement the budgeted University funds in order to provide the relevant volumes to satisfy the requirements for a major in Communications.

New costs annually for the program are estimated to begin at \$381,244 the first year and include clerical support (\$25,000); supplies and materials (\$5,000); library resources (\$2,244); equipment (\$209,000); two full-time faculty salaries ((\$100,000) and a video supervisor (\$40,000). In addition, as noted in the table on costs and revenues, the proposal states that the University has already submitted a Title III proposal for equipment. Estimated new costs decrease to \$333,894 during the second year; increase to \$428,561 in the third year; decrease slightly to \$427,254 in the fourth year; and decrease again to \$417,820 in the fifth year. The total estimated new costs for the program for its first five years will total \$1,988,773.

The following table shows the estimated Mission Resource Requirement (MRR) costs to the state and new costs not funded by the MRR associated with implementation of the proposed program for its first five years. Also shown are the estimated revenues projected under the MRR and Resource Allocation Plan as well as student tuition.

Estimated Program Costs and Revenue

	Estimated Program Costs		Estimated Program Revenue				
	(A) MRR Cost	(B) Other Costs*	(C) Actual State Funding	(D) Tuition	(E) Additional Revenue	(F) Total Revenue (C+D+E)	
Year 1	\$88,379	\$209,000	N/A	\$107,907	\$308,000	\$415,907	\$118,528
Year 2	\$125,203	\$60,000	\$76,394	\$152,930	\$163,500	\$392,824	\$207,621
Year 3	\$167,919	\$40,000	\$108,162	\$204,948	\$276,000	\$589,110	\$381,190
Year 4	\$213,582	\$35,000	\$145,224	\$260,837	\$273,000	\$679,061	\$430,479
Year 5	\$250,406	\$20,000	\$184,555	\$305,861	\$266,000	\$756,416	\$486,010

*Includes costs of an extraordinary nature not otherwise included in the MRR cost calculation (e.g., costs for a new building required to support a program). See narrative that follows.

In the MRR table shown above, “other costs” represent the cost of equipment needed to support the program. South Carolina State University has informed the staff in writing that these costs will be paid through a Title III grant which already has been awarded to the University. These Title III funds to be allocated to the proposed program are shown as “additional revenue.”

The data shown in the MRR table demonstrate that if the institution meets the projected student enrollments and contains costs as they are shown in the proposal, the program will be able to cover costs beginning in the first year and thereafter.

In summary, the University’s proposed program leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree in Communications with concentrations in Journalism and Broadcasting in Fall 2009, and eventually Public Communications in will prepare students for employment in the increasingly diverse field of Communications. The program is designed to address the underrepresentation of minorities in Journalism, Broadcasting, and Public Communications nationally and in South Carolina.

Recommendation

The Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing commends favorably to the Commission approval of the program leading to the Bachelor of Arts in Communications with concentrations in Journalism and Broadcasting at South Carolina State University, to be implemented in Fall 2009, provided that no “unique cost” or other special state funding be required or requested and provided further that:

1. Title III funds are allocated to the program during its first five years at the level stated in the proposal;
2. Faculty identified by this proposal are hired and retained during the first five years of the program’s implementation; and
3. Prior to implementing the concentration in Public Communications in Fall 2013, South Carolina State University will formally notify the Commission that the necessary faculty have been hired, courses developed, and library and equipment resources will be in place to permit students to graduate from the program not later than Spring 2017.