

**New Program Proposal
Bachelor of Arts
Sociology
USC Beaufort**

Summary

USC Beaufort requests approval to offer a new program leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology, to be implemented in Fall 2010. The proposed program is to be offered through traditional instruction on the North (Beaufort) and South (Bluffton) campuses.

The Program Planning Summary was submitted to the Commission on May 1, 2009, and reviewed and voted upon favorably without substantive comment by the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP) on October 8, 2009. USC's Board of Trustees approved the final proposal on October 16, 2009. The final proposal was received by the Commission on November 12, 2009.

According to the proposal, the purpose of the proposed program is to provide graduates with a strong background and prepare them for employment opportunities in the diverse fields related to sociology. The proposal states that graduates from the proposed program will be prepared to enter careers in such areas as public health, gerontology, criminology, anthropology, and numerous other social science fields. The proposal also states that in addition to the direct career paths available, graduates will be prepared for graduate school in sociology and related disciplines.

The proposal states that the need for this program is evidenced by the many USC Beaufort students who have expressed a desire to major in Sociology. The number of students enrolled in sociology courses has increased from 15 students in 1995 to a current enrollment of 80 students. The proposal states that the University has experienced a 42% growth from 2003-2004 to 2007-2008 in the number of sociology credit hours taken by students. According to the proposal, the school's service area of Beaufort County is the fastest growing county in the state and will definitely need individuals trained to address the social and organizational service needs across complex cultural sectors. In addition, the U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, and the S.C. Office of Research and Statistical Services note that by the year 2025 Beaufort County's population will increase to 194,570 from 120,937 in 2000, a 60% increase.

The proposal cites the College Blue Book, which states that the majority of universities in the United States include programs in sociology. Nine public colleges and universities and ten independent institutions in South Carolina offer a program leading to a Bachelor's degree in Sociology. However, none of the institutions are within commuting distance of USC Beaufort. There are institutions in nearby states that offer this program, such as Savannah State University in Savannah, Georgia. Commuting to these locations poses an economic challenge to students by substantially increasing their living, traveling, and tuition expenses.

Projected new enrollment for the program will be 15 new students (15.9 FTE) in the program's first year, increasing to 16 students (16.4 FTE) in the second year, increasing to 17 students (17.6 FTE) in the third year, and further increasing to 18 students (18.6 FTE) and 19 students (19.8 FTE) in the fourth and fifth years of the program respectively. According to the proposal, projections for the Fall 2010 enrollment are based mainly on the current enrollment of students in introductory and upper-level sociology courses and on past patterns of increased

enrollment. If enrollment and program completion projections are met, the proposed program will meet the Commission's productivity standards.

The proposal states that admissions and transfer criteria will be the same as for all other students accepted into USC Beaufort undergraduate programs. The proposal also states that current articulation agreements in place with South Carolina's two-year institutions will apply. USC Beaufort has developed a PASSPORT Program with the Technical College of the Lowcountry to assist associate degree graduates with the transition to a four-year institution.

The proposed program will consist of 120 credit hours of coursework. The coursework will include the core courses requirement (38-49 credit hours); general education requirements specific to sociology (6 credit hours); major requirements (37 credits hours); and electives (28-39 credit hours). No new courses will need to be added to USC Beaufort's course catalog to support the program.

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 major test, portfolio reviews, rising senior surveys, graduating student surveys, and alumni surveys.

The proposal states that in the first five years of the program no new faculty, administration, or staff members will be hired to support the program. Adjunct faculty will be used to meet the demands of the proposed program. There is no specialized accrediting body for the proposed program.

According to the proposal, the existing physical plant and classroom facilities at both the North (Beaufort) and South (Bluffton) campuses are adequate to provide space for the proposed program. No new equipment is required.

According to the proposal, USC Beaufort's library provides print and electronic resources, including the statewide PASCAL databases, Interlibrary Loan, Internet access, bibliographic instruction, and a variety of class-specific user education programs. The institution has allocated an annual budget of \$8000 per year for each degree program, which will allow the institution to add over 130 new titles per year to support the Sociology program.

New costs for the proposed program are modest and include \$9,000 in the first year, increasing to \$11,000 in the second year, decreasing to \$9,000 in the third year, increasing to \$11,000 in the fourth year and decreasing to \$9,500 in the fifth year. Categories of new costs in the first five years of the proposed program include Office Supplies and Materials (\$9,500), and Library Resources (\$40,000). Total new costs for the first five years of the program are estimated to be \$49,500. Revenues will be generated through tuition funding and reallocation of existing funds. No "unique cost" or other special state appropriations will be required or requested.

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

Estimated Program Costs and Revenue

	Estimated Program Costs		Estimated Program Revenue				(G) Total Revenue - Total Costs (F-(A+B))
	(A) MRR Cost	(B) Other Costs*	(C) Actual State Funding	(D) Tuition	(E) Additional Revenue	(F) Total Revenue (C+D+E)	
Year 1	\$84,290	\$0	N/A	\$118,876	\$0	\$118,876	\$34,586
Year 2	\$86,941	\$0	\$38,704	\$122,376	\$0	\$161,080	\$74,140
Year 3	\$93,302	\$0	\$40,003	\$131,534	\$0	\$171,537	\$78,235
Year 4	\$98,603	\$0	\$42,861	\$139,291	\$0	\$182,152	\$83,549
Year 5	\$104,965	\$0	\$45,198	\$147,691	\$0	\$192,890	\$87,925

*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).

These data show that if USC Beaufort can meet the projected student enrollments and contain costs as shown in the proposal, the proposed program will be able to cover costs with revenues it generates beginning in the first year of implementation.

In summary, USC Beaufort is proposing a program leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology. The proposal demonstrates that there is a growing need in the college's service area for the proposed new program in Sociology. Graduates of the program will be prepared to work in various capacities in the region's growing and culturally, socially, and economically diverse region.

Recommendation

The staff recommends that the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing commend favorably to the Commission approval of the program leading to a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology at USC Beaufort's North (Beaufort) and South (Bluffton) campuses, to be implemented in Fall 2010, provided that no "unique cost" or other special state funding be required or requested.