

**New Program Proposal
Master of Arts
Writing
Coastal Carolina University**

Summary

Coastal Carolina University requests approval to offer a program of study leading to the Master of Arts degree in Writing. The degree will be offered on-campus through traditional instruction and will be implemented in Fall 2010.

The Program Planning Summary was submitted to the Commission on April 29, 2008, and reviewed and voted upon favorably without substantive comment by the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP) on July 17, 2008. The Coastal Carolina University Board of Trustees approved the proposal on February 19, 2009, and the proposal was received by the Commission on November 9, 2009.

According to the proposal, the purpose of the proposed program is to make individuals more proficient writers in the areas of professional writing, creative writing, and writing instruction. Therefore, the proposed program is designed to attract teachers, aspiring creative writers, professional writers, and researchers. The proposal states that recent Myrtle Beach industry employment data reveals that 49.3% of the jobs in Horry County are in the service industry and 11% of the jobs are classified as government jobs; many of those jobs require strong writing skills for advancement. The proposal also cites the Bureau of Labor Statistics which says that the employment of writers and editors nationally is expected to grow by 10% over the next decade as writing career options increase and evolve with technology. Furthermore, an advanced degree makes aspiring writers, journalists, editors, grant managers, and technical writers more competitive in the job market and eligible for higher salaries.

Similarly, according to the proposal, public school teachers with an advanced degree such as the proposed M.A. in Writing earn \$5,000 - \$8,000 more per year than those who possess only a bachelor's degree. The proposal cites a recent survey sent to Horry County middle and high school English/English Language Arts teachers; 71% of the 135 respondents stated that they are very likely or somewhat likely to take M.A. in Writing courses and 47 respondents also indicated that they would pursue the M.A. in Writing degree program at Coastal Carolina University.

Coastal Carolina University junior and seniors were also surveyed to determine interest in the program; 57% of the respondents (65 of 115) stated that they would be interested in pursuing the M.A. in Writing program. A similar survey of the University's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute's participants revealed that 28% of the respondents (11 of 39) expressed interest in the proposed program.

In addition, the proposal argues that the proposed program is needed because the region lacks graduate writing programs, and no program in the state combines creative and professional writing. According to the proposal, there are over 260 creative writing master's programs; however, there are only two in South Carolina: USC-Columbia and Converse College. Clemson University offers a program leading to the Master of Arts in Professional Communication, but this program differs from the proposed program because Clemson's program combines the study of professional communication with visual and digital media,

communication theory, and research. Furthermore, the College of Charleston offers a program leading to the Master of Arts in Communication, and USC-Columbia offers programs leading to the Master of Mass Communication and to the Master of Arts in Journalism and Mass Communication degrees. However, the proposed program differs from these programs because they emphasize communication rather than writing as a discipline. There are also programs leading to the Master of Arts in English offered at Bob Jones University, Clemson University, College of Charleston/The Citadel, USC-Columbia, and Winthrop as well as a program leading to the Master in Liberal Arts degree offered by Converse College. Unlike the proposed program, these programs are not dedicated to the practice of creative and professional writing.

The proposal states that there will be 10 new students (19.5 FTE) in the proposed program's first year, increasing to 15 students (23.3 FTE) in the second year, and further increasing to 21 students (32.2 FTE) by the fifth year of the program. These FTEs exceed the headcount of students majoring in the program because of the number of non-majors who are expected to enroll in courses offered by the proposed program in the summer semester. These non-majors include educators seeking graduate credits for recertification and students enrolled in the M.A.T. program. If enrollment and program completion projections are met, the proposed program will meet the Commission's productivity standards.

Admission to the proposed program will require a bachelor's degree and two of the following credentials: a 3.3 GPA in 18 hours of undergraduate coursework in English or a related discipline; a score of 500 on the verbal portion of the GRE or a 4.0 on the GRE Written Assessment; and an acceptable rating awarded by the graduate committee to a 20-page writing sample. The curriculum for the proposed program will consist of a total of 33 credit hours and include a successful defense of a thesis. In order to support the proposed program, fourteen new courses will be added to the college catalog. The focus of the new courses will be professional writing (Principles of Editing and Publishing, Workshop in Professional and Technical Writing, and Writing and Editing Internship), creative writing (Forms of Creative Writing, Graduate Writing Workshop-Fiction, Graduate Writing Workshop-Creative Non-fiction, and Graduate Writing Workshop-Poetry), and composition and literature (Composition and Rhetoric, Workshop in Composition and Rhetoric, Topics in British Literature, Topics in American Literature, Topics in Linguistics, and Topics in World Literature). The proposed program's assessment plan has three components designed to assess the different aspects of the program's curriculum: successful completion of coursework, successful completion of an internship, and successful defense of a master's thesis.

Faculty for the proposed program will be drawn from existing faculty currently teaching in the English Department. Currently, 21 tenured and tenure-track faculty members are on staff. The proposal also notes that the University is in the midst of an aggressive hiring program that will add five additional tenure-track faculty over the next three years. Three of these new hires will support the proposed program, but only with a portion of their FTE because most of their FTE will support existing undergraduate operations. Therefore, each of the new hires will contribute, at most, 0.25 FTE annually to the proposed program. In the first year of the proposed program, a total of five faculty members will be needed (1.25 FTE), and in the second through fifth years of the program, six faculty members (1.50 FTE) will be needed to support the program.

The proposal states that existing classroom space at Coastal Carolina is sufficient for the proposed program. The proposal further notes that the University is planning to construct a new building that will house a Publishing Lab for this proposed program. The proposal states that this Lab will serve students both inside and outside of class and will directly serve the Principles

of Editing and Publishing, Forms of Creative Writing, Workshop in Professional and Technical Writing, Writing and Editing Internship, and Thesis Research courses. In addition, the Publishing Lab will provide the workspace and equipment necessary to complete small-scale graduate-level publishing projects and will be available for students to complete out-of class projects such as broadside production and work on the literary magazine.

According to the proposal, the proposed program will require additional library resources because the library's collections are somewhat less than peer institutions in terms of total titles owned. The proposal states that the library collection in creative and professional writing needs to increase by ten titles in the first year of the program at a cost of \$580. While the increase of ten titles in the first year of the proposed program would meet the benchmark of Coastal Carolina University's peer institutions of 44 titles per student, the majority of the library's holdings are titles published more than ten years ago. Because less than 21 % of the titles in creative writing and 27% of the titles in professional writing in the library's collection were published within the last ten years, additional acquisitions of current and relevant materials are needed. As a result, the budget includes \$2,000 per year for library resources for the second through fifth years of the proposed program. Staff recommends that the budget for library resources be focused initially on increasing current titles in professional writing, which has a shorter shelf life than creative writing titles, in order to bring the collection up-to-date in holdings needed for this proposed program.

There is no specialized accreditation for the proposed program. The proposed M.A. in Writing degree will prepare graduates for more advanced degrees, and students who complete the program will be well-prepared to enter graduate programs in English, creative writing, business, law, and education at institutions across the state.

New costs for the proposed program are estimated to begin at \$46,110 the first year and include program administration costs (\$5,000); faculty salaries (\$17,280); support for graduate assistants (\$10,000); clerical/support personnel salaries (\$11,250); supplies and materials (\$2,000); and library resources (\$580). Estimated new costs increase to \$122,353 the second year due to the added cost of the Publishing Lab (\$47,197), decrease to \$96,133 the third year, then increase to \$97,191 the fourth year and \$98,270 the fifth year. The total estimated new costs for the program for its first five years will total \$460,057 and include program administration costs (\$25,000); faculty salaries (\$214,030); support for graduate assistants (\$90,000); clerical/support personnel salaries (\$56,250); supplies and materials (\$10,000); library resources (\$8,580); and equipment for the Publishing Lab (\$56,197).

Shown 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 for 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	\$156,671	\$47,197	N/A	\$135,095	\$0	\$135,095	-\$68,773
Year 2	\$186,800	\$0	\$85,629	\$161,458	\$0	\$247,087	\$60,287
Year 3	\$213,917	\$0	\$102,217	\$184,208	\$0	\$286,426	\$72,509
Year 4	\$241,033	\$0	\$117,012	\$207,814	\$0	\$324,825	\$83,793
Year 5	\$258,775	\$0	\$131,806	\$222,980	\$0	\$354,787	\$96,011

*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 the institution meets the projected student enrollments and contains costs as they are shown in the proposal, the proposed program will be able to cover costs beginning in the second year and thereafter. "Other costs" represent the cost of the Publishing Lab needed to support the program; this lab will be paid for by technology funds allocated to the college.

In summary, Coastal Carolina University proposes to offer a program of study leading to the Master of Arts degree in Writing. The proposed program emphasizes professional writing, creative writing, and writing instruction and will prepare students for employment in a wide variety of areas as well as for more advanced degrees in English, creative writing, business, law, and education. In addition, local public school teachers and participants in the University's Osher Lifelong Learning Institute have demonstrated a strong interest in the proposed program.

Recommendation

The staff recommends that the Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing commend favorably to the Commission the program leading to the Master of Arts degree in Writing at Coastal Carolina University, to be implemented in Fall 2010, provided that no "unique cost" or other special state funding is requested or required.