

New Program Proposal
Ph.D. in Criminology and Criminal Justice
USC-Columbia

Summary

USC-Columbia requests approval to offer a program leading to the Ph.D. degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice to be implemented in Fall 2008. If approval is granted by the Commission on Higher Education, this will be the only doctoral degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice in the state of South Carolina.

The Board of Trustees of the University of South Carolina approved the proposal on June 28, 2007. The proposal was submitted for Commission review on July 11, 2007. The proposal was reviewed by the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs at its meeting on October 11, 2007, and the program was approved unanimously after a discussion in which all comments aired were supportive of the need for the proposed program.

The purpose of the program is to develop a doctoral program to prepare graduates to conduct research, to help others apply the findings of that research, and to serve as a resource for policy leaders, criminal justice officials, and social service agencies. In addition to the core of criminology courses required for the program, students will be expected to take at least one elective from another social sciences and or related discipline. According to the proposal, students will be drawn from multiple areas outside of criminal justice and from the master's-level criminology program at the University.

As required by CHE policy, the program proposal was reviewed comprehensively by an external evaluator, Dr. Lawrence E. Sherman, Chair of the University of Pennsylvania Department of Criminology and Albert M. Greenfield Professor of Human Relations. The evaluator was positive in his assessment of existing Criminology programs at USC-Columbia, the proposed program which will build on them, and the qualifications of the faculty who will implement the proposed Ph. D. program.

The need for the program is rooted in the increased market demand for professionals trained at the doctoral level in this field. According to the proposal, this demand results from the increasing need for Ph. D. faculty in Criminology and Criminal Justice programs, the increasing amount of research required to understand and combat a growing regional and national problem, and the need for

trained criminologists at every level of government. The proposal also states that the proposed program will fulfill an institutional and state need in that it will increase the program faculty's competitiveness when applying for research grants and awards. This is especially important in that the faculty, according to the proposal, is already one of the most productive in the nation in terms of research and publication.

A total of six new courses will be required for the proposed degree. The degree will require at least 36 semester hours of coursework beyond the M.A., M.S., or J.D. degree. The curriculum will consist of a core of five courses (15 semester hours); two research methods courses (six semester hours); three courses (nine semester hours) as electives, with at least one of these from another department; and at least 12 semester hours of doctoral dissertation research. As is typical, a dissertation and an oral defense are required by the degree program.

According to the proposal, there are no Ph. D. programs leading to the degree in Criminology and Criminal Justice in any of the southeastern states except Florida, and only 32 such programs exist in the country. The two similar programs in Florida, offered at Florida State University and Florida Southern University, are available to South Carolina residents through the Academic Common Market.

No new faculty members or staff will be required to implement the program. A total of 12 faculty (3.5 FTE) will begin to teach in the program in Fall 2008. This faculty commitment will be maintained for the program throughout the first five years of its implementation. In comparison with leading programs field, the proposed faculty at USC-Columbia is slightly smaller than the norm, but generally not dramatically so. The largest faculty referenced is at Michigan State University with 20 graduate faculty members in the Criminology Department. The proposal states that collaboration with other departments at USC will add strength and breadth to course offerings and will offset the small faculty size of the proposed program. In addition, the proposal makes the case, supported by the outside evaluator, that the faculty have strong research and publication credentials, a wide breadth of academic interests, and have been successful in acquiring grant support.

Enrollment in the proposed program is intentionally to be kept small throughout the first five years of the program's implementation due to the size of the faculty and the research emphasis of the program. Student enrollment is estimated to begin at six students (6.57 FTE) in FY 2008-2009 and increase its maximum to eighteen students (19.5 FTE) in FY 2010-2011. If enrollment projections are realized, the program will meet the current CHE program productivity standards.

There is no recognized accrediting body for Criminology and Criminal Justice programs.

The physical plant is adequate, according to the proposal, for the first five years of the program's implementation. There are no anticipated additional costs in this area. According to the proposal, the holdings of the Thomas Cooper Library are adequate to support the proposed program, and no additional costs are listed.

New costs for the program are estimated by the institution to begin at \$60,000 in year one, comprised solely of support for three new doctoral-level graduate assistants. In the second year of the proposed program the overall cost of the proposed six new doctoral-level graduate assistantships (\$120,000) will be somewhat offset through the elimination of existing masters-level assistantships (\$91,440). Therefore, in the second year of the program the proposed new costs are \$28,560 for graduate assistantships and \$5,000 for new computers for a total of \$33,560. The effect of the elimination of the masters-level assistantships is continued through the third, fourth, and fifth year of the proposed program, in which the new cost of ten doctoral-level assistantships is \$108,560. The proposed program's third year also includes \$5,000 of new costs for computer equipment. The total projected new cost for the program is \$414,240.

Shown below are the estimated Mission Resource Requirement (MRR) costs to the state associated with implementation of the proposed program for its first five years. Also shown are the estimated revenues projected under the Mission Resource Requirement and the Resource Allocation Plan as well as student tuition.

Year	Estimated MRR Cost for Proposed Program	Extraordinary (Non-MRR) Costs for Proposed Program	Total Costs	State Appropriation	Tuition	Total Revenue
Year 1	\$115,655	\$0	\$115,655	N/A	\$66,547	\$66,547
Year 2	\$207,585	\$0	\$207,585	\$59,140	\$118,962	\$178,102
Year 3	\$346,964	\$0	\$346,964	\$106,885	\$198,612	\$305,497
Year 4	\$346,964	\$0	\$346,964	\$177,961	\$198,612	\$376,574
Year 5	\$346,964	\$0	\$346,964	\$177,961	\$198,612	\$376,574

These data demonstrate that if the new program meets its enrollment projections and contains costs as they are shown in the proposal, the program will be able to cover new costs with revenues it generates by the fourth year of its implementation.

In summary, the proposed program will add an unduplicated Ph.D. program in the state. The program has received high affirmation from the external expert who did an analysis of the proposal. A growing need appears to be occurring for persons with this kind of professional background.

Recommendation

The Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing commends favorably to the Commission approval of the program leading to the Ph.D. in Criminology and Criminal Justice at USC-Columbia, to be implemented in Fall 2006, provided that no “unique cost” or other special state funding be required or requested.