



April 28, 2006

ANDREW A. SORENSEN  
PRESIDENT

Dr. Conrad Festa  
Executive Director  
South Carolina Commission on Higher Education  
1333 Main Street, Suite 200  
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Dr. Festa:

Accompanying this letter please find a program planning summary to modify a Master of Social Work, College of Social Work, USC Columbia.

Sincerely,

Andrew A. Sorensen

AAS:nid  
Enclosure

***Program Modification***  
***Summer 2007***  
***Master of Social Work at offsite locations in Charleston and Greenville***  
***College of Social Work***  
***University of South Carolina***

The proposed program modification for the College of Social Work (COSW) to be implemented in Fall 2007 is to offer the Master of Social Work (MSW) program **offsite** in Charleston and Greenville, without students having to travel or move to the central Columbia campus of The University of South Carolina (USC). The MSW program offered at these two sites will follow a blended model, combining distance education courses with more traditional classroom experiences.

In this program modification proposal, there will be no change to the program requirements or number of credit hours required for the Master of Social Work program offered by the College of Social Work at USC. Students pursuing the MSW in Charleston and Greenville will be required to take the same **60 credit hours** and meet all the same degree requirements as current students at the Columbia campus. The students at these two sites will also have the same options as students in Columbia to focus their studies on either 1) Individuals, Families and Groups or 2) Communities and Organizations.

The College of Social Work will offer more than 50 **per** cent of the courses required for the MSW degree in a **traditional** classroom setting in both Charleston and **Greenville**. The College of Social Work currently **offers** approximately 35 per cent of the MSW program by distance education for students around the state and **will** continue to do this. The remaining hours are field experience and will be offered within the community setting at approved sites. First year courses will remain **distance** education courses for the most part. The off-site traditional courses will include Summer, Fall and Spring course offerings at these sites. The College of Social Work will teach the courses in Charleston and Greenville in the evenings and on weekends so that professionals would also be able to pursue the degree.

The College of Social Work expects that approximately twenty students would enroll in the USC's Master of Social Work program at each site when it begins, with modest increases in future years.

***Justification of need for proposed program***

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook, the number of social work positions across the country will increase between 18 and 26 per cent through 2014 (**BLS, 2006**). The National Association of Social Workers has also indicated an impending shortage of social workers and describes specific needs for social workers working with **the** elderly, children and families (NASW, 2006).

Social workers at the BSW level in Greenville and Charleston would be very interested in a Master of Social Work but are unable to pursue this degree at this time because **they** are tied to

Greenville and Charleston for employment and family reasons. Offering the entire program (full-time and part-time) in Greenville and Charleston will give them additional options and expand the pool of student applicants to USC. Graduating students **from** BSW programs at Winthrop University and Limestone College would be particularly interested in continuing their education locally.

At this time, **48** students enrolled **in** the MSW program in Columbia live in and around Charleston, and **70** students reside **in** the Greenville area. This is another clear indication of interest in the program and **the** need for it in these two areas of the state. We anticipate attracting **potential** students **that** have chosen not to matriculate due to the travel requirements of the on-campus program.

**Informal** and formal data were gathered by the USC Extended Graduate Campus for Charleston on December **7, 2005**. Twelve directors and supervisors of social workers in Charleston County employed by the Department of Health and Environmental Control and by the Charleston County **Department** of Social Work indicated that this program modification was needed and that they would support their employees pursuing this degree. They also indicated that current employees are facing major challenges **trying** to complete the **program from** a distance. In two information sessions held by Dr. Leon **Ginsberg** (former Dean of the College of Social Work) with 39 potential students in Charleston, 90 per-cent in attendance **already** had BA degrees and were **ready** to consider **an** MSW degree.

Informal and formal data were also collected for the Greenville area in March **2005** and November **2005** by the Extended **Graduate** Campus Representative. In March, **82** per-cent of those surveyed, including students **from** South Carolina State University and social workers at Department of Social Services, said that they would be very interested in pursuing an MSW degree in Greenville. Students at Limestone College and USC Upstate also were very positive about the possibility of the USC MSW program being offered in proximity to home.

The proposed program will address the needs of place-bound working adults who are clearly interested in pursuing the MSW degree.

### *Duplication of programs in the state*

The University of South Carolina offers the only fully accredited Master of Social Work program by the Council of Social Work Education in the State of South Carolina. Winthrop University in Rock Hill will begin offering a Master of Social Work program in Fall **2006** but is currently a "candidacy MSW program" (CSWE, 2006). Winthrop has a fully accredited Bachelor of Social Work program, as are BSW programs across the state at South Carolina State University, Limestone College and Columbia College.

### *Relationship of the proposed program to existing programs at USC*

For the Fall **2006** exclusively, the Moore School of Business is providing classroom space to the College of Social Work for its courses in Greenville at no cost to the College.

The College of Social Work currently offers dual degree programs with the Arnold School of **Public Health** and the School of **Law**. USC offers the options for students to pursue a Master of Social **Work/Master** of Public Health or a Master of Social **Work/Juris** Doctor.

The College of Social Work also administers an interdisciplinary Graduate Certificate Program in Drug **and** Addiction Studies with course offerings from many other disciplines, such as criminal justice, public health, medicine, psychology, and social work.

### *Relationship of the proposed program to programs at other institutions*

Students enrolled in the MSW programs in Charleston and **Greenville** will be meeting the field experience requirement for the program at field agencies in their communities. The College of Social Work will thus interact even more regularly with these local field sites.

The South **Carolina** Center for Gerontology at USC is currently a partnership among numerous universities in South Carolina, namely Clemson University, Coastal Carolina University, Lander University, South Carolina State University, and **Winthrop** University. For this center, the College of Social **Work** administers an interdisciplinary certificate of **Graduate** Study in Gerontology. The Center for Gerontology hosted a joint, statewide Summit on Aging on November **4,2005** entitled Aging with Vitality.

### *Estimated Costs*

Estimated costs to deliver off-sites programs to the Greenville and Charleston **areas** are modest (approximately **\$50,000** per year). Included in this amount are the costs associated with travel, recruitment, faculty, classroom space, and technology equipment. The College of Social Work intends to work with **current** full-time and adjunct faculty already associated with the College residing in Greenville and Charleston. These **faculty** members have already expressed interest in teaching at these locations.