

Appendix J

Request for Authorization to Establish a Master of Arts in Spanish Degree at UNC Wilmington

Introduction

UNC Wilmington requests authorization to establish an MA in Spanish degree (CIP 16.0905) effective August 2008.

Program Description

The proposed MA in Spanish program will consist of 30 semester hours of courses designed to improve students' language skills in speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Students will also enhance their cultural competency by learning about the primary artistic, historical, literary, and sociological trends of the Hispanic world. The program will prepare students for cross-cultural professions in teaching, banking, business, government, health care, law, media, medicine, politics, and social work.

Program Need

The rapid growth of the Hispanic population in the nation is nowhere more evident than in North Carolina, which had the fastest growing population of Hispanics in the US in the last decade, 394 percent (Rural Data Bank of the NC Rural Economic Center). These demographic considerations have affected institutions of higher education throughout the nation. Spanish now accounts for over half of college and university enrollments in all foreign languages in the US (Modern Language Association). In order to be competitive in both domestic and global job markets, it is increasingly important to be able to function at a high level of linguistic and cultural proficiency in Spanish. The proposed program will help foster civic engagement and enhance career options for its graduates. Approximately 200 undergraduates major in Spanish at UNCW, and 128 responded in a survey that they would be interested in a graduate program, with 81 saying that they would apply if it were available. It is anticipated that 10 full-time and 24 part-time students would be enrolled by the fourth year of the program.

Resources

Existing facilities and instructional resources are adequate to support the program. Three new hires in Spanish have been made in the last two years, thus no new hires will be needed for the next four years. Graduate-level courses already exist that are used for the graduate certificate in Hispanic Studies, thus only one additional 500-level course will be needed each semester.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the UNC Wilmington request to establish a Master of Arts in Spanish degree (CIP 16.0905)) effective August 2008.