

Request for Authorization to Establish a Bachelor of Arts in Appalachian Studies at Appalachian State University

Appalachian State University requests authorization to establish a BA in Appalachian Studies degree (CIP 05.0199) effective August 2008.

Program Description

ASU proposes developing existing concentrations within the BA in Interdisciplinary Studies into separate degree programs. The proposed BA in Appalachian Studies will offer an organized, cohesive course of study of the Appalachian region through interdisciplinary methods. The major educational objective of the program is to provide a framework for understanding the complexities of local and regional cultures in Appalachia and the relationship of local to regional, national, and international issues. The 25 faculty who teach in the interdisciplinary program are drawn from 13 academic departments. As one indication of student demand, in fall 2007 153 students were enrolled in the five Appalachian Studies courses offered that term. It is anticipated that in its fourth year the program will have 30 majors.

UNC Tomorrow Relevance

The program responds to UNC Tomorrow findings relating to global readiness, the environment, our communities and their economic transformation, the environment, and outreach and engagement. Students will gain knowledge of local and international correspondences as the program's "Community Study/Research" requirement underscores intersections between the Appalachian region and other national and global communities. Field study, travel abroad, and service learning opportunities will support the "local to global" emphasis of ASU's general education initiative. Students will learn civic engagement necessary for working with a range of communities and will develop an understanding of interrelated ecological, economic, and social factors that impact the region.

Resource Implications

Faculty teaching courses for this degree are in 13 departments across campus, and the number is adequate for the program. The majority of courses are now offered as part of departmental offerings. The Appalachian Studies courses are supported through supplemental instructional funds on campus and graduate assistant allocations. The program director position is supported from an endowment account at present. Moving this and other interdisciplinary degree programs out of the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies (which will be dissolved) into the newly created University College will save some resources associated with a departmental infrastructure, including the department chair position.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the ASU request to establish a Bachelor of Arts degree in Appalachian Studies (CIP 05.0199) effective August 2008.