

Request for Authorization to Establish a Master of Urban Design Degree at UNC Charlotte

UNC Charlotte requests authorization to establish a Master of Urban Design degree (CIP 04.0301) effective August 2009.

Program Description

Urban Design integrates the separate disciplines of architectural design, landscape design, land use planning, transportation policy, development economics, and engineering. It draws together the factors involved in making sustainable human environments—environmental responsibility, social equity and economic viability—and melds them with attractive and safe public environments through processes that involve design research and practice, participatory democracy, and physical construction. The program is an applied research and design degree, structured to prepare beginning and mid-career design and planning professionals to engage complex issues faced by towns, cities, and regions. The program will collaborate with other degree programs such as Architecture and Geography (Community Planning track). The program will examine the post-industrial landscapes being reshaped by information technology, global capital movements, rapidly shifting demographics, soaring urban growth, and new environmental challenges of sustainable development.

UNC Tomorrow Relevance

The program primarily responds to UNC Tomorrow findings relating to our communities and their economic transformation, globalization, the environment, and outreach and engagement. The program takes advantage of its location in Charlotte, which as one of the fastest growing cities in the U.S. has attracted national interest by rapidly transforming itself into a globalizing southern metropolis. The program will be one UNC Charlotte action in responding to regional needs and contributing to the economic future of the region. The focus can best be summarized as “The Global South: Creating the Sustainable Southern City.”

Resource Implications

College of Architecture faculty will staff the program, with new faculty lines to be added as enrollment growth funding is available. Private funds are being raised to create a “Distinguished Chair of Urban Design” position. After sharing space in the College of Architecture in its first year, the program will be located in the new UNC Charlotte Center City Building.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the UNC Charlotte request to establish a Master of Urban Design degree (CIP 04.0301) effective August 2009.