

APPENDIX K

Request for Authorization to Establish a Master of Arts Degree in Criminology and Public Sociology at UNC-Wilmington

Introduction

UNC-Wilmington notified UNC-GA of its intent to plan a Master of Arts degree in Criminology and Public Sociology (CIP 45.1101) in February 2007. UNCW requests authorization to establish the degree effective August 2007.

Program Description

Students will be able to concentrate in either criminology or public sociology in learning theoretical and methodological tools that will enable them to acquire and apply specific information to particular problems. The diverse interests of the graduate faculty will accommodate a variety of interests. In public sociology, specific strengths include study of rural and urban poverty, race-gender class inequalities and stratification, social structure and organizational power, globalization, and culture and media. In criminology, strengths include not only traditional criminal justice studies but criminological theory and social justice including restorative justice. Students will work with faculty to develop an individualized course of study. It is anticipated that 25 full-time and 5 part-time students will be enrolled by the fourth year of the program.

Program Need

Increasingly, non-academic employers (government, social, service, commercial, public, and private agencies, programs and businesses) need social science skills and reliable information that they can use to assess policy and plan, monitor, and evaluate their efforts. The theoretical and methodological developments in the social sciences can address the acute need for professional skills that apply information to specific problems. In recent years the Sociology and Criminal Justice Department has been approached by a variety of organizations with requests for competent MA individuals who can fill positions in applied social science and criminal justice areas, in the management of research and related positions. Research shows that students graduating from traditional graduate social science curricula felt they lacked the skills to work in non-academic areas such as those described. The proposed program will address this mismatch between traditional academic and applied professional curricula by providing students with training to seek employment in federal, state, and local governmental and private-sector organizations.

Resources

Three new tenure-track faculty were hired this year, and, as enrollments grow, two additional faculty will be hired in the second year of the program and one each in the third and fourth years. Facilities and technology resources are adequate to accommodate the program.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the UNCW request to establish the MA in Criminology and Public Sociology degree (CIP 45.1101) effective August 2007.