

## **Request for Authorization to Establish a Master of Social Work Degree at UNC Pembroke**

### **Introduction**

UNC Pembroke notified UNC-GA of its intent to plan a Master of Social Work degree in February 2005. UNCP requests authorization to establish the Master of Social Work (CIP 44.0701) effective January 2008.

### **Program Description**

The UNCP MSW program will be a 60 credit hour program with three configurations. It is intended to offer a full-time and a part-time program, as well as an advanced standing program. The program will admit approximately 25 students per year. After 2 years UNCP anticipates having approximately 50 students. The part-time program is an important option because many prospective students are employed full-time. They are unable to attend other North Carolina MSW programs that necessitate full-time participation or require absence from their worksite during normal working hours. The proposed MSW program will have a direct relationship with the present undergraduate social work program offered at UNCP. Social Work department faculty will share responsibilities for both programs; however, a majority of each faculty member's workload will be assigned either to the master's program or to the undergraduate program.

### **Program Need**

UNC Pembroke has awarded degrees to an average of 40 BSW majors for the last five years, placing the undergraduate program among the largest in North Carolina. Of the over 200 respondents to planning surveys, 72 per cent reported interest in the program, with the majority preferring the part-time program configuration. Currently approximately 38% of the BSW graduates attend graduate school. When those surveyed were asked if they would apply to an existing MSW program if UNCP did not establish a program, a majority said they would be unable to attend another school. The primary barriers were distance and program considerations. Several studies have documented North Carolina's critical need for MSW professionals, particularly for those specialized in child welfare and mental health, and engaged in rural practice. Given the levels of poverty, the aging population, and the growing number of people of Hispanic background in need of services, the demand for additional social workers is evident across the state and in the UNCP region.

### **Resources**

Funds will be obtained from enrollment growth and reallocation of internal resources. The possibility of securing additional funding from federal grants will be explored when new faculty are hired as the program expands.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the UNCP request to establish the Master of Social Work degree (CIP 44.0701) effective January 2008.