

APPENDIX E

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte Request to Plan a Doctoral Program in Organizational Science

Introduction

The University of North Carolina at Charlotte requests approval to plan a doctoral program in Organizational Science (CIP: 30.9999).

Program Description

Organizational Science is a field of inquiry and practice focusing on human well being and performance in work settings. As an area of study, it assumes that a thorough understanding of organizations requires an interdisciplinary focus that crosses levels of analysis and incorporates theory from such diverse fields as psychology, management, sociology, and communication studies. As Organizational Science is both a science and a practice, enhanced understanding leads to applications and interventions that benefit the individual, the organization, the customer, and the larger community in which the organization operates.

Organizational Science is interested in a wide range of work-related topics. The specific topics of study in Organizational Science include, but are not limited to:

- *Team and Organizational Effectiveness*: organization culture and climate; group dynamics; cross-cultural issues; customer service; labor relations
- *Selection, Testing, and Promotion*: recruiting; test development; assessment centers; test fairness; hiring; consultation and expert testimony on EEO/AA, ADA, OSHA
- *Training and Development*: executive coaching; management development; training
- *Performance Evaluations*: design of job performance measurement systems for feedback and performance improvement, performance appraisal and management
- *Workplace Health*: ergonomics, human factors, and safety; overcoming stress
- *Employee Attitudes and Satisfaction*: empowerment; retention; job satisfaction; conflict and stress management; aging and retirement; turnover; organizational commitment
- *Compensation and Benefits*: pay; perks; rewards; recognition
- *Communication Effectiveness*: organizational communication design, processes and effectiveness; technology-facilitated communications
- *Employee Motivation*: factors that motivate employees; job design and evaluation
- *Change Management*: mergers and acquisitions; process reengineering; productivity and quality improvement; downsizing
- *Employee citizenship and deviance*: harassment; bullying; pro-social behavior; violence

- *Work–Life Programs*: quality of work life; work–life balance; telecommuting

Organizational Science has its origin in four core disciplines: Industrial/Organizational Psychology, Organizational Behavior/Human Resources Management (OB/HRM), Organizational Sociology, and Organizational Communication. Despite the congruence of interests in the afore-listed topics across these disciplines, for the most part, the disciplines act fairly independently. What differentiates Organizational Science from its core disciplines, then, are not the topics of study but, instead, the interdisciplinary perspective with which the topics are studied. Organizational Science views the world of work from multiple perspectives and paradigms. It is richly interdisciplinary in both philosophy and practice, examining workplace topics from the perspective of each of its core disciplines. Consider, for example, the study of group behavior and effectiveness. Researchers from Human Resource Management and Industrial Psychology might look at the selection and training of team members. Researchers with Organizational Behavior and Organizational Psychology backgrounds may focus on interpersonal processes in groups such as norms, roles, cohesiveness, and conformity. Organizational Sociologists may examine how the greater context (e.g., society, sector, and culture) in which the group is embedded impacts the group. Organizational communication researchers may focus on the communication processes (e.g., persuasion) that facilitate/inhibit group effectiveness.

Organizational Science attempts to integrate the four perspectives to more fully understand the organizational phenomenon in question, thus positively impacting both science and application. It is important to recognize, however, that in their own right, each of the core disciplines comprising Organizational Science is thriving. Despite the success of the four respective disciplines, however, scholars in each acknowledge that the potential impact of any one field on the world of work is mitigated to the extent that researchers and practitioners do not engage in systemic and integrative thinking and research.

Program Review

The review process for requests to plan is designed to determine if the proposal is developed to the stage appropriate for taking to the Graduate Council and if so what are the issues that may need further attention. Proposals to plan doctoral programs are reviewed internally. The concerns from the reviewers were summarized in a letter to the Chancellor prior to the presentation to the Graduate Council. That summary follows:

A difficulty of any interdisciplinary program is to combine organizational structure with genuine shared interests in problems for research and instruction. UNCC has experience with interdisciplinary doctoral programs and this program needs to draw from that experience to identify both good practices and pitfalls. More attention to the plan for making the interdisciplinary collaboration successful for both students and faculty will aid the reader in understanding UNCC's approach. It will be important to continue to attend to the demand for graduates and to make sure the program is structured to fit that demand. There seems to be a lament that so few actual interdisciplinary programs have emerged in response to the call to make the field more interdisciplinary. Is the difficulty

that of retooling existing programs or do other reasons account for this? Being clear about this will likely benefit the planning for a new interdisciplinary program. The usual sources are identified for the support of graduate students. More details are needed regarding this support since the price tag for 25 or so graduate students will be high. Outside funding would need to increase significantly if that usual source is going to carry an appropriate part of the stipend load.

Another helpful examination would be to compare other or another interdisciplinary program in this field and show similarities and dissimilarities. Readers might get a better sense of the direction of the program from such an analysis.

Graduate Council

The Graduate Council had, as a basis for its consideration, the proposal to plan the program, the summary letter to the Chancellor, and a presentation to the Council by representatives of the program.

Response

Representatives of the program recounted the many steps already taken to successfully promote interdisciplinary activity at the university and for this program. The supporting programs are significantly interdisciplinary already and the director of the program will report to two deans rather than to department chairs.

A plan for funding the program was presented that was a combination of reallocation of current resources, developing paid internships for one year of study, expanding grant activity for supporting graduate students, developing a research/consulting center, and accessing enrollment growth funds.

Recommendation by the Graduate Council

After consideration of the issues raised by previous reviewers and Council members, the Graduate Council voted, without dissent, to recommend approval for the University of North Carolina at Charlotte to plan a doctoral program in Organizational Science.

Issues to Address in Planning

The funding for graduate students is always an issue of concern in a new doctoral program as is the overall funding of the program.

Recommendation

The Office of the President recommends that the Educational Planning Committee approve the request from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte to plan a doctoral program in Organizational Science.

Approved to be Recommended for Planning to the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs

