

## APPENDIX I

### **Request for Authorization to Establish a Master of Science Degree in Applied Gerontology at UNC Wilmington**

#### **Introduction**

UNC Wilmington requests authorization to establish a Master of Science in Applied Gerontology degree in August 2007.

#### **Program Description**

The proposed interdisciplinary degree will train professionals to face the challenges of a nationally and regionally aging population. The program will be built on a theoretical foundation, supported by the practical application of service learning, integrating teaching, research, and service. Graduates will use their knowledge of applied gerontology to affect the quality of life for older adults in retirement communities, health care settings, and other public and private organizations that provide services and goods needed by an aging population. Graduates will be able to realistically consider careers involving work with older adults through synthesizing coursework in biology, health sciences, psychology, and sociology of aging, as well as hands-on experience with older populations. The program developers have relied on curriculum guidelines published by the Association for Gerontology in Higher Education.

#### **Program Need**

An Applied Gerontology Curriculum Planning Task Force was established in 2004 through a grant from the Council of Graduate Schools and the Ford Foundation. The task force conducted a review of an earlier workforce survey completed by the UNC Institute on Aging in 2000. Based on this analysis, UNCW, UNCP, and FSU established the Southeastern NC Gerontology Consortium. UNCW updated the survey and administered it to 303 businesses in southeastern NC that work with the elderly population. A large percentage (93%) indicated a need for more and better educated workers in the field of gerontology. Students who have taken coursework in gerontology at UNCW have also indicated strong interest in this program. The coastal region is a popular retirement location, and UNCW is well positioned to provide well prepared professionals to work with this older population.

#### **Resources**

Because this is an interdisciplinary program, the faculty and courses are already present in a variety of departments. The Division of Academic Affairs will fund future needs as enrollment growth indicates.

#### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the request to establish a Master of Science in Applied Gerontology degree (CIP 30.1101) at UNC Wilmington effective August 2007.