

APPENDIX L

Request for Authorization to Establish a Master of Art in Teaching English as a Second Language or Foreign Language at Western Carolina University

Introduction

Western Carolina University notified UNC General Administration of its intent to plan a Master of Art in Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language (CIP# 13.1401) in May 2005. WCU requests authorization to establish the program in June 2006.

Program Description

The MA in Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language (TESOL) will combine a strong theoretical foundation in applied linguistics with practical training in the teaching of English to speakers of other languages. The principal goals of the program are to provide the linguistic theory necessary for ESL teachers, to equip teachers with practical skills of language teaching, and to prepare student for further study in English Language Training and Applied Linguistics. Students will be required to take 36 hours of courses for the degree. The program would prepare students to teach ESL at the community college and university level. The program would be located in the Department of English, and additional courses would be needed to obtain ESL licensure to teach in public schools.

Program Need

WCU is expanding the number of international programs on campus, including summer programs for TOEFL (Teaching of English as a Foreign Language) classes. The MA degree would build on a five-course TESOL certificate program that WCU started three years ago. The immigrant populations in North Carolina have increased greatly in the last decade, and teachers in community colleges across the state are not well prepared to deal with the needs of their ESL adult students. The English Department receives regular requests about graduate courses in TESOL, and several community colleges in the region have emphasized their need for qualified ESL teachers and coordinators. WCU has a particularly strong record in providing master's level courses for community college faculty in a variety of fields. Although there are a number of ESL add-on programs in NC, this would be the state's first stand-alone MA-TESOL program. It is anticipated that by the fourth year of the program 30 full-time and 10 part-time students would be enrolled.

Resources

Current facility, technology, and library resources are adequate. An additional Applied Linguist is currently being hired by the English Department, which will ensure sufficient faculty for the program in its first four years.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the request to establish a Master of Art in Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language (CIP 13.1401) effective June 2006.