

Request for Authorization to Establish a Master of Science in Coastal and Ocean Policy at UNC Wilmington

UNC Wilmington requests authorization to establish an M.S. in Coastal and Ocean Policy degree program (CIP 03.0205).

Program Description

UNCW requests to establish a multidisciplinary M.S. degree in Coastal and Ocean Policy (MCOP). This non-thesis degree program, requiring completion of 42 graduate semester credit hours, will be implemented in conjunction with faculty in the Center for Marine Science and a wide range of academic departments. The MCOP program will provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to assume leadership roles in governmental and nongovernmental organizations involved in the formulation, implementation, and administration of coastal and ocean policy at all levels of government in the U.S. and abroad. In particular, it will train a new generation of professionals capable of bridging the gaps between scientists, policy makers, land managers, governmental and nongovernmental agencies, and the interests of private citizens in order to address critical coastal and ocean policy issues. The program, to be administered by UNCW's Department of Public and International Affairs, is a combination of public policy, science, and applied science courses.

UNC Tomorrow Relevance

This proposed program would address several Recommendations within the UNC Tomorrow Report including the components to enhance our Global Readiness (Recommendation 4.1), Our Communities and Their Economic Transformation (Recommendation 4.4), Our Environment (Recommendation 4.6), and Our University's Outreach and Engagement (Recommendation 4.7).

Highlights from UNC-GA Data Template

There are no other M.S. in Coastal and Ocean Policy degree programs currently offered in North Carolina. In the past three years, UNCW has discontinued two masters and five baccalaureate programs, and has established three masters and four baccalaureate programs.

Outcome of Consultation with Disciplinary Panels

The panel included faculty members from ASU, ECU, UNCC, and NCSU in addition to the UNCW faculty presenter. Overall comments were positive, with consensus agreement on the need for this degree program. Panel members made thoughtful suggestions for ways to strengthen the curriculum, and UNCW agreed to use upcoming new faculty positions in the program to attempt to implement these good suggestions.

Student Demand

This program is designed primarily for two groups of students: students with a background in science or technology who want to study the policy issues of coastal management, and students with a background in public policy who want to learn the science of coastal and ocean issues. Student interest in this type of degree program is demonstrated by the fact that faculty who recruit for UNCW's Master of Public Administration and M.S. in Marine Science programs routinely get inquiries from students interested in focusing their graduate work in the area of coastal management and marine policy.

To formally evaluate student interest, a survey of UNCW undergraduate students was conducted in Fall 2008. Declared majors in academic disciplines where students might have an interest in studying coastal and ocean policy problems at the graduate level received the email survey. The results indicated appropriate, good student interest in the proposed MCOP degree program. UNC Wilmington projects full enrollment of the program in its fourth year will be 29 students (20 full-time and nine part-time students).

Opportunities for Graduates of the Program

Data indicate that the employment outlook for graduates of a coastal and ocean policy masters program is quite positive at the federal, state, and local level. North Carolina's Employment Security Commission estimates that there is increasing demand for a wide range of job categories that potentially could be filled by MCOP graduates. Examples include natural sciences managers, environmental engineers, and emergency management specialists. At the federal level, documentation indicates the job outlook for MCOP graduates is also strong. In addition, UNCW surveyed a wide range of potential employers asking which types of job specializations their organization had hired in the past five years to address coastal and ocean policy problems. Many job specializations reported by the potential employers could be filled by MCOP students.

Resource Implications

Resource needs: Existing courses, facilities, and equipment are adequate to initiate the program. Two or three additional faculty positions will be needed by year 4, as well as additional library resources. If enrollment growth funding is not provided, UNCW has committed to supporting the resource needs of this new degree program by gradual reallocation of existing resources; MCOP enrollment will be matched to the resources available.

Resources allocated: UNC Wilmington has reallocated an existing faculty position to support the initiation of the program in 2012.

Estimated cost to the State: Based on the University funding formula, when the program reaches full enrollment, UNCW would receive additional state appropriations of approximately \$387,000 if fully funded by the General Assembly.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve UNC Wilmington's request to establish an M.S. in Coastal and Ocean Policy degree program (CIP 03.0205) effective January 2012, subject to the availability of funding.

General Information Template for Academic Program Review

Degree Area and Level:

M.S. in Coastal and Ocean Policy (CIP 03.0205) at UNC Wilmington

Addressing UNC Tomorrow:

This proposed program would address several Recommendations within the UNC Tomorrow Report including the components to enhance our Global Readiness (Recommendation 4.1), Our Communities and Their Economic Transformation (Recommendation 4.4), Our Environment (Recommendation 4.6), and Our University's Outreach and Engagement (Recommendation 4.7).

Role of Program in Relation to State and Regional Needs:

The final report from the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy indicates that within the next 40 years, there will be an urgent demand to educate and train a new federal workforce of ocean professionals to carry out the recommendations of U.S. ocean policy in the 21st Century.

As stated in the proposal submitted by UNC Wilmington, "North Carolina's Employment Security Commission estimates that there is increasing demand for a wide range of job categories that potentially could be filled by MCOP graduates. Jobs in the life, physical, and social science related occupations are projected to increase at an annualized rate of 1.88% through 2014, which amounts to 1,760 job openings in North Carolina on annual basis. Management related occupations are also growing at an annualized growth rate of 1.11% with annual openings in North Carolina totaling around 8,130. However, natural science managers are growing at an even faster annualized rate of 1.36% with approximately 40 job openings per year expected through 2014."

US Labor Department Analysis:

- *Summary* – Based on the CIP code, the Occupational Supply Demand System puts this degree program in a broad category of Forestry and Conservation. Employment of conservation scientists and foresters is expected to grow by 5 percent during the 2006-16 decade, more slowly than the average for all occupations. Demand for forest and conservation workers will increase as more land is set aside to protect natural resources or wildlife habitats.

Availability of Program Statewide (Enrollment and Degrees Awarded in Last 3 Years):

- *Public universities* – Not available.
- *Private universities* – Not available.

Available or not from Academic Common Market:

Not available.

UNC Wilmington Campus enrollment and degrees awarded in similar programs at the Masters level:
(Based on two CIP digits – 03 CIP is the summary group for Natural Resources and Conservation under which Coastal and Ocean Policy is listed as a program)

Enrollment			Academic Year						
			Fall 07	Spr 08	Fall 08	Spr 09	Fall 09	Spr 10	Fall 10
UNCW	Environmental Studies	MA	N/A	N/A	21	27	40	40	37

Number of Degrees Awarded			Academic Year		
			2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
UNCW	Environmental Studies	MA	N/A	5	14

Campus Average of enrollment and degrees awarded per degree program in this area at the Masters level over the last three Academic Years, Fall 2007-Fall 2010:

(Based on two CIP digits – 03 CIP is the summary group for Natural Resources and Conservation under which Coastal and Ocean Policy is a program)

Campus Average			
	Number of Active Programs	Enrollment per Semester	Degrees Awarded per Year
NCSU	5	29	9
UNC-CH	1	66	28
UNC-W	1	33	10
Campus Average		43	16

UNC Wilmington Campus Degree Programs added in the past three years:

- *Bachelor*
 - BS Community Health Education (06/13/2008)
 - BS Oceanography (02/12/2010)
 - BA International Studies (04/09/2010)
 - BS Exercise Science (06/11/2010)
- *Master*
 - MA Environmental Studies (01/11/2008)
 - MA Spanish (01/11/2008)
 - MS Clinical Research and Product Development (04/09/2010)
- *Doctoral*
 - N/A

UNC Wilmington Degree Programs discontinued in past three years:

- *Bachelor*
 - BA Special Education, Cross-Categorical (03/20/2009)
 - BA Special Education, Behaviorally/Emotionally Handicapped (03/20/2009)
 - BA Special Education, Mental Retardation (03/20/2009)
 - BA Special Education, Learning Disabilities (03/20/2009)
 - BA History, Teacher Licensure (03/20/2009)
- *Master*
 - MA Mathematics (03/20/2009)
 - MEd Special Education (02/12/2010)
- *Doctoral*
 - N/A