

APPENDIX H

July 24, 2002

MEMORANDUM

To: Committee on Educational Planning, Policies and Programs

From: Molly Corbett Broad

Subject: Establishment of the Center for Transportation Policy Studies at UNC Charlotte

Request to Establish

In September 2001, UNC Charlotte received authorization to plan the Center for Transportation Policy Studies. The planning is now complete, and UNC Charlotte has submitted a request to establish this unit as an institutional research center. The following sections briefly summarize the information provided by UNC Charlotte to satisfy the requirements of *Administrative Memorandum #373*.

Goals and Objectives

The mission of the center is to become an important resource to state, regional, and local decision makers responsible for making public investments in all modes of transportation systems and services. Specifically, the center will:

- Facilitate collaboration among researchers from several disciplines;
- Address issues that enable UNC Charlotte to impact public policy involving transportation systems and services;
- Conduct research on topics that will promote efficient regional and statewide transportation system investment decisions;
- Conduct research that will promote progressive, sustainable physical development and positive social change in the region and state;
- Disseminate research findings and conclusions to scholarly audiences and public and private policy makers;
- Form effective working partnerships among various entities at UNC constituent institutions, local and state governments, and private stakeholders in the planning, programming, design, management, maintenance, safety, environmental protection, and security of transportation systems.

Relevance to Institutional Mission; Relationship with Existing Academic Units

The center will advance two key themes in UNC Charlotte's Academic Plan for 2002-2007: Urban and Regional Development, and Applied Sciences and Technologies. With respect to the first theme, it will offer intellectual and technical expertise, provide historical and national perspectives for the region's transportation-related problems, and facilitate a unified regional approach to solving common transportation problems. With respect to the second theme, it will extend its work in emerging areas such as intelligent transportation systems, traveler information systems, and transportation infrastructure safety, as well as collaborate with other UNC Charlotte units such as the College of Information Technology and the Global Institute for Energy and Environmental Systems. Moreover, since beginning UNC Charlotte's transportation policy studies initiative, the center's Director has consulted and collaborated with the following related University units to maximize the uniqueness of the center's mission and its potential for collaboration:

- Highway Safety Research Center (UNC-Chapel Hill)
- Institute for Transportation Research and Education (NCSU)
- Center for Transportation and the Environment (NCSU)
- Transportation Institute (NC A&T)

None of these units have a mission focused specifically on transportation policy studies. The center would be the only university transportation center between Virginia and Florida that focuses specifically on public policy.

Anticipated Effects on Instructional Programs

The center will significantly enhance instructional and research programs at UNC Charlotte at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Undergraduate students will gain hands-on experience through collecting and analyzing data and writing reports related to specific projects conducted by the center. Masters degree students in Geography and Earth Sciences, Engineering, and Ph.D. candidates in the Public Policy program will engage in similar activities as well as conduct research under the direction of center faculty. The center also will facilitate the following types of activities:

- Seminars on disaster management and homeland security, with particular emphasis on transportation infrastructure (in collaboration with Mecklenburg County's Homeland Security Office, the UNC Disaster Institute, and others);
- Seminars on energy, environment, transportation, and regional growth (in collaboration with Duke Energy and the Global Institute for Energy and Environmental Systems)
- Transit summits to support rail and other regional transit planning efforts (in collaboration with the North Carolina Department of Transportation and regional transit agencies);
- Training programs for rural planning organizations (in collaboration with the North Carolina Department of Transportation and the Western Piedmont Council of Governments).

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While the center will not offer degree programs, it will benefit existing programs such as doctoral programs in Public Policy; masters programs in Architecture, Public Administration, and Health Promotion; and baccalaureate programs in Geography and Civil Engineering.

Administrative Structure

The center's Director will be Dr. Edd Hauser, Professor of Geography and Earth Sciences, and Professor of Civil Engineering. The Director will report to the Associate Provost for Metropolitan Studies and Extended Academic Programs. An Internal Advisory Committee composed of key UNC Charlotte faculty and administrators will advise the Director on plans and programs, as well as provide internal support and identify other resources. At the conclusion of the center's first three years of operation (Academic Year 2005-2006), an External Advisory Committee, composed of national, regional, and state representatives, will be appointed to provide more in depth involvement with the external professional and business community.

Budget and Anticipated Sources of Funding

The center's faculty will be funded through existing academic appointments. For its first year of operation, the center is expected to have a program budget of \$425,000, with approximately 60 percent deriving from external grant and contracts, and 40 percent deriving from participating department support. Operating as a research program to date, the center has received support from the following sources: the North Carolina Department of Transportation, regional foundations, local governments in the Charlotte Metropolitan region, and private business and public agencies in other states. Future funding is anticipated from such programs as the Southeastern University Transportation Center, the National Cooperative Highway Research Program, and the Transit Cooperative Research Program. Projected funding from grants and contracts, both through the center and in association with academic departments, is expected to double after the first three years of operation. No additional state funding is requested with this establishment.

Space and Capital Needs

No additional space or resources are requested for the center's operations. The center staff currently operates in space assigned by the Associate Provost for Metropolitan Studies and Extended Academic Programs.

Recommendation

It is recommended that UNC Charlotte be authorized to establish the Center for Transportation Policy Studies.