

**Request for Authorization to Establish a
Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Research, Measurement, and Evaluation
(Ph.D., CIP 13.0601) at
UNC Charlotte**

I. Program Highlights

- Designed to prepare professionals with advanced research, data analytic, and evaluation skills for positions in a wide variety of educational institutions, including higher education, K-12 school districts, for-profit companies, non-profit agencies, community colleges, think tanks, government organizations, and other organizations interested in solving problems in education
- 60 credit hours
- Core coursework in statistics and methods, plus research specialization courses
- Required internship in educational research
- 12 full-time and 20 part-time students projected at steady state
- Resources needed to launch the program include program director stipend, graduate research assistant stipends, data analysis software, library resources, supplies and materials, travel, communication, printing and binding, and advertising. One additional faculty FTE is projected to be needed by Year 3. Should enrollment growth funds be unavailable, UNC Charlotte is committed to fund program needs through internal reallocations.

II. BOG Academic Program Planning Criteria (UNC Policy 400.1)

1. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** UNC Greensboro offers a PhD in Educational Research, Measurement and Evaluation. NC State University offers the PhD in Educational Leadership, Policy and Human Development with a specialization in Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis. These programs are currently approved for on-campus delivery.
2. **Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** UNC Charlotte, through its mission, leverages its location in the state's largest city to offer internationally competitive degree programs while maintaining a particular commitment to address needs of the greater Charlotte region. The proposal includes eighteen support letters from local school districts and other interested organizations in the Charlotte region. The program also closely aligns with the UNC Charlotte and UNC Charlotte College of Education's 2015-2020 strategic plans, which focus on the development and maintenance of high quality graduate programs that solve problems at the interface of disciplines and leverage discovery for the public benefit.
3. **Demand (Local, regional, state).** In 2013, UNC Charlotte commissioned Hanover Research to conduct a market assessment for the proposed program. Their study, based on data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data Systems (IPEDS), found that enrollment in related Ph.D. programs nationally grew by 11% and 17% respectively for 2008 and 2012. In May 2015, a need and interest survey was conducted in the Charlotte area. A total of 126 leaders in K-12 schools, community colleges, for-profit and non-profit companies, higher education, and medical education were invited to participate; 46 responded, and of those, 87% indicated a need in the Charlotte region for this program.

- 4. Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** The proposed program and enrolled students will benefit from close relationships and unique opportunities to work alongside school districts and employers in the Charlotte region, as evidenced by the numerous support letters in the proposal and the willingness of partners to provide practicum experiences.
- 5. Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** Hanover Research used Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data to generate occupational profiles and employment projections for graduates of related programs. Hanover found that related occupations, such as survey researchers and social science researchers and postsecondary teachers, are projected to grow within North Carolina and across the region. In addition to the Hanover research market analysis and support letters from potential employers in the Charlotte region, the proposal included analyses of job postings from spring 2014. Over 250 relevant positions were posted by organizations such as NC Department of Public Instruction, various institutions of higher education, and local and regional public and private schools systems. Typical position titles included test developers, regional accountability coordinators, institutional effectiveness directors, institutional research directors and researchers, and educational program evaluators.
- 6. Faculty Quality and Number.** Nine full-time faculty members, all with graduate faculty status, will serve as dissertation chairs for students in the proposed program. Faculty in other departments within the College of Education, as well as outside of the College of Education at UNC Charlotte, will also contribute to the program.
- 7. Availability of Campus Resources (library, space, etc.).** Facilities and information technology services are adequate to launch the program. Since most required courses for the proposed program already exist, the core library collection is in place to support this program with minimal additions needed.
- 8. Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** The proposed program will target experienced educators who hold a master's degree in a related educational field.
- 9. Impact on Access and Affordability.** While the proposed program is likely to draw an applicant pool beyond the Charlotte region, it will provide a level of access desired by professionals in and around the Charlotte region.
- 10. Expected Quality.** In addition to the external reviews required by UNC General Administration, UNC Charlotte had an additional seven external reviewers to examine the proposed curriculum and faculty capacity and provide letters. These reviewers found the proposal and program requirements to be compelling and appropriate.
- 11. Feasibility of Collaborative Program.** A hallmark of the proposed program is the collaboration across multiple units at UNC Charlotte which house extensive datasets that are directed at improving educational, social and economic outcomes for children in the Charlotte region. These include the Center for Educational Measurement and Evaluation, the Center for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education, Project Mosaic (partnership of the College of Education, College of Health and Human Services, and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences); UNC Charlotte Urban Institute; and Institute for Social Capital. Additionally, faculty from UNC Charlotte and NC State University met over 2014 to discuss opportunities for

collaboration, including course sharing, research collaborations, shared professional development opportunities, and dissertation committee service.

12. Other Considerations. None.

III. Summary of Review Processes

Campus Review Process and Feedback. In addition to the College of Education Dean, Provost and Chancellor, the proposal was reviewed and unanimously approved by each of the following: Department of Educational Leadership; College of Education Graduate Council; UNC Charlotte Graduate Council. No substantive issues, concerns or opposition were raised that required substantive revision to the proposal.

UNC General Administration Review Process and Feedback. Throughout the review process, UNC Charlotte responded to questions from UNC General Administration regarding educational objectives, student demand, societal demand, enrollment projections, program delivery, curricular requirements, collaboration, budget, and faculty capacity.

The request to plan the program was first reviewed by the UNC Graduate Council in November 2014. Based on the program's proposed emphasis on solving practice-based problems, target audience, and curricular requirements, the Council recommended that UNC Charlotte resubmit the proposal as a Doctor of Education (Ed.D.) degree instead of a Ph.D. In response, UNC Charlotte invited a review by Dr. David Imig, Chair of the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate. Dr. Imig found the proposed program to be closely aligned with the requirements and focus of other related Ph.D. programs across the country. After further refining the request to plan, UNC Charlotte presented the proposed Ph.D. a second time to the UNC Graduate Council in February 2015, when the Council voted to support the request to plan (9 in favor, 5 opposed). UNC Charlotte was encouraged to continue its efforts towards clarifying and communicating the program identity.

Three external reviewers evaluated the request to establish the proposed program. All reviewers agreed on the need for more well-trained research methodologists. Two reviewers favored the proposed program while one expressed concerns around the curriculum requirements and the level of faculty contributions to scholarship in the fields of research, evaluation and measurement. Upon reviewing this feedback, UNC General Administration requested an Academic Analytics analysis of the research and scholarly productivity of UNC Charlotte's faculty in comparison to peer programs and other research universities, including others in the state. When compared to these groups, UNC Charlotte's faculty scored at or above the mean for twenty-six different productivity metrics with exception of awards per faculty and citations per publication. UNC Charlotte agrees that the addition of a seasoned research methodologist will make important contributions to the proposed program. The College of Education is committed to search in Fall 2016 for a senior faculty member with a strong record of scholarship in educational measurement and methods, external funding, and doctoral student support.

Benefits of program approval include high leverage of existing resources and curriculum capacity to meet an identified need, particularly in the Charlotte region. For these reasons, we do not recommend any alternatives to implementing the degree program.

IV. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve UNC Charlotte's request to establish a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Educational Research, Measurement and Evaluation degree program (CIP 13.0601) to enroll students starting Fall 2017.