

**Request for Authorization to Establish a
Bachelor of Science in Health Systems Management
(B.S., CIP 51.0701) at
University of North Carolina at Charlotte**

I. Program Highlights

- Designed to prepare students as generalists in the health systems management field, able to enter either the workforce or graduate education upon graduation.
- The large student population of UNC Charlotte's College of Health and Human Services exceeds the capacity of its health and human services disciplines, which are regulated by professional accreditation agencies. A generalist health management degree would enable UNC Charlotte to serve the needs of students interested in the field while ensuring timely matriculation and graduation.
- Core courses provide overview of the U.S. healthcare system and foundational knowledge specific to health systems management, including human resource management, organizational theory, leadership and ethics, policy and law, accounting and finance, quality management and performance improvement, and technology management.
- Service-learning or other healthcare capstone experience required
- General education, major courses, and elective credits total 120 credit hours
- 300 full-time and 50 part-time students projected at steady state
- Resources needed to launch the program include three tenure-track faculty and two lecturers by Year 4; administrative assistance, a stipend to a service-learning coordinator, two graduate teaching assistants, and minimal supplies and materials, travel, and communications support. Source of needed funds include internal reallocation of resources and enrollment growth funding.

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

1. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** Appalachian State University, East Carolina University, Fayetteville State University, UNC Chapel-Hill, Western Carolina University, and Winston-Salem State University offer baccalaureate degrees in health care administration and management. Of these, only ECU's program offers an online option, and WCU is approved for site-based delivery in three counties surrounding the institution. Several private institutions also offer related degrees, including Mount Olive College, Gardner-Webb University, and Pfeiffer University.
2. **Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** The proposed program is aligned with UNC Charlotte's mission to address the educational and health needs of the greater Charlotte region. Health and Society is one of six major themes of the UNC Charlotte Division of Academic Affairs Plan, 2016-2021. The proposed program would extend the existing capacity and expertise of the College of Health and Human Services, which currently offers professionally accredited baccalaureate programs in athletic training, exercise science, nursing, public health, and social work. The capstone requirement also aligns with the institution's stated desire to provide experiential and community-engaged learning opportunities for undergraduates.

3. **Demand (Local, regional, state).** UNC Charlotte's College of Health and Human Services (CHHS) has a large proportion of students who seek health-related careers but for whom there is insufficient space due to restraints imposed by accrediting agencies. Students are admitted into a pre-major and apply for acceptance to the upper-division major in the sophomore year. A large number of the pre-major student population are qualified but may not be admissible into major programs in a timely manner due to capacity limitations in existing baccalaureate offerings. While some students remain and graduate from UNC Charlotte with a non-CHHS degree, significant numbers of students leave the institution each year. Hence, the main impetus for this proposed program is to better serve a large pool of students who have already chosen UNC Charlotte as their preferred institution and health and human services as their desired major area. In June 2015, UNC Charlotte surveyed all health and human services pre-majors to determine their interest in the proposed degree as an alternative to their current pre-major degree programs; 562 responded. Across all pre-major programs, an average of 68.3% of respondents indicated they would consider a Health Systems Management major if not admitted into their chosen major on the first try; an average of 84.7% of respondents across the pre-majors indicated it was important to remain in a health-related major. An average of 31% of respondents across all pre-major respondents indicated a Health Systems Management major would likely be their first choice if offered.

UNC Charlotte also utilized Hanover Research for an analysis of student and employer demand. Hanover found that overall growth in student demand for healthcare management programs has grown substantially in recent years and outpaced the capacity of undergraduate programs in health sciences and nutrition. Completions in healthcare management between 2009 and 2013 grew 21.1% nationally, 13.9% regionally, and 8.5% in North Carolina.

4. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** A primary impetus of this program proposal is to serve a cadre of existing students who desire to declare a major in health and human services and complete their degree at UNC Charlotte but are faced with program size limitations.
5. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** Hanover Research found that managers in medical and health services settings are projected to be among the fastest growing occupations in coming years. Employment projections from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and NC Department of Commerce predict above-average ten-year employment growth for Medical and Health Services Managers, at 23.2% national and 12.5% state-level projected growth.

UNC Charlotte also sought information about student outcomes from existing UNC programs. According to the website for Appalachian State University's Healthcare Management program, typical starting salaries for entry-level positions obtained by their graduates are \$30,000-\$45,000 and may include duties and position titles such as human resources management, information systems analyst, marketing, public and/or consumer relations, billing and reimbursement analyst, or supervision in patient care areas. Additionally, ASU and ECU report that many baccalaureate graduates in healthcare management go on to pursue graduate education in areas such as occupational or physical therapy, MBA, MPH, MHA, health informatics, and other related areas.

6. **Faculty Quality and Number.** Seven existing faculty in the Department of Public Health Sciences will be directly involved in the program launch. By Year 4, UNC Charlotte plans to add three tenure-track faculty and two lecturers to accommodate the projected student demand.

7. **Availability of Campus Resources (library, space, etc.).** Library, facilities, and information technology resources are adequate to launch the program.
8. **Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** The proposed program will draw significantly upon the existing capacity and expertise of CHHS, which currently offers professionally accredited baccalaureate programs in athletic training, exercise science, nursing, public health, and social work.
9. **Impact on Access and Affordability.** By offering the proposed degree program, more students will be able to stay at UNC Charlotte and complete a valuable health-related baccalaureate degree, saving them the time and expense of transfer.
10. **Expected Quality.** All existing degree offerings in CHHS have achieved professional accreditation.
11. **Feasibility of Collaborative Program.** The proposed program will serve an on-campus baccalaureate student population at UNC Charlotte.
12. **Other Considerations.** None.

III. Summary of Review Processes

Campus Review Process and Feedback. The proposal was reviewed by the UNC Charlotte CHHS new degree planning committee, Dean's office, CHHS Faculty Curriculum Committee, and the full CHHS faculty prior to its forward to the UNC Charlotte Undergraduate Course and Curriculum Committee and the UNC Charlotte Faculty Council. No opposition was raised throughout the campus review process, and minor suggestions were incorporated into the proposal at various stages of review.

UNC General Administration Review Process and Feedback. Throughout the review process, UNC Charlotte responded to questions from UNC General Administration regarding student demand, professional accreditation, post-graduate outcomes, curriculum requirement, faculty capacity, and budget. Reviewers from five UNC system institutions evaluated the proposal, and all reviews were "acceptable" or "acceptable with some considerations" in every category. UNC Charlotte responded to their questions on enrollment growth and planning, program requirements and curriculum, and program accreditation. UNC Charlotte reiterated that the program is intended to contribute to student retention and degree completion. Some reviewers sought additional information on the elective courses and pathways available to students. UNC Charlotte discussed their intentional decision to not require one or more specific minors within this degree program but rather to rely on careful advising to support a wide range of student career goals. Finally, since other UNC programs are accredited by the Association of University Programs in Health Administration (AUPHA), several reviewers questioned UNC Charlotte's stated decision to not seek AUPHA accreditation at this time. UNC Charlotte responded that neither employment opportunities nor admission to graduate programs are limited to graduates of AUPHA-certified programs at this time. The potential to consider AUPHA certification certainly exists for the future, but it is neither the primary motivation nor the near-term focus of the new degree program initiative.

Benefits of program approval include improved capacity of UNC Charlotte to serve an existing pool of students with a value-added degree in their field of interest and with opportunity for employment or graduate study. 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 Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Health Systems Management degree program (CIP 51.0701) to enroll students starting Fall 2017.