

**Request for Authorization to Establish a
Master of Arts in Hispanic Studies
(M.A., CIP 16.0908) at
East Carolina University**

I. Program Highlights

- The M.A. in Hispanic Studies degree program will prepare students with a bachelor's degree in Spanish (or other areas if the student possesses the required Spanish-language proficiency) for successful interactions and performance in professions which serve diverse populations and in which linguistic and cultural competence is in high demand. Examples include health services, hospitality, criminal justice, and communications.
- This program will be delivered on-campus and online.
- This degree program consists of either 30 credit hours of coursework and comprehensive examination or 24 credit hours of courses and a thesis. The curriculum includes 9 credit hours of core courses in research methodologies and engaged learning, as well as 21 credit hours of electives. Beginning in the program's second year, half the courses will be face-to-face and half through distance education (DE), which will be conducted both synchronously and asynchronously. The DE instruction will rotate to allow distance education students to fulfill all requirements.
- The institution projects 4 full-time students and 2 part-time students in the first year and 20 full-time students and 15 part-time students by the fourth year.
- No new faculty positions are required. However, the institution requests 8 new teaching assistants.
- The institution does not request differential tuition.
- A faculty Program Director will receive one course reassigned time for duties. The ECU Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures (the Department) will absorb that cost.
- The institution will not require new library resources or facilities and equipment.

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

1. **Existing Programs (Number, Location, Mode of Delivery).** Five institutions in North Carolina currently offer similar programs (Appalachian State University, North Carolina State University, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and the University of North Carolina at Wilmington). Appalachian State, UNCG, and UNCW reported that the vast majority of their graduates obtain employment, particularly in the education profession.

None of the existing programs reside in the region served by ECU. The programs offered at NC State and UNCW have agreed to accept credits from the proposed degree. ECU would reciprocate (up to the 10 credits allowed by the ECU Graduate School), thus increasing access and options to complete a graduate degree.

2. **Relation to Campus Distinctiveness and Mission.** The proposed MA in Hispanic Studies degree program will fulfill the mission of ECU through cultural enrichment, preparation to succeed in a global society, and providing a graduate learning experience that utilizes innovative learning strategies and delivery methods to maximize access (stated as a goal in the ECU mission and UNC System Strategic Plan).

3. **Demand (local, regional, state).** The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) forecasts significant growth in professions utilizing skill sets provided by the proposed degree program. Employment in the field of interpretation/translation will grow 29% between 2014 and 2024. Community Colleges across the country may hire faculty with M.A. degrees in Hispanic Studies.

The proposed degree program will also qualify graduates for national, state, and local governments in need of employees with Spanish language and intercultural skills, as well as knowledge of the history, politics, and economics of Spanish-speaking nations. Law enforcement agencies and all branches of the Armed Forces hire individuals with the knowledge and skills the proposed degree program will develop.

Locally, Vidant Medical Center and other institutions have employed ECU's BA graduates from the Department as interpreters/translators. Vidant Medical Center is currently advertising interpreter positions at: https://careers.vidanthealth.com/Careers/Job-Listings/Interpreter_932453. An MA would prepare students better than a BA for these and similar careers, and allow graduates to command higher salaries.

4. **Potential for Unnecessary Duplication.** None of the five existing programs in North Carolina are offered in the region served by ECU. The proposed degree program will be the only MA program in the state to make all courses leading to the degree available through distance education (beginning in the second year after program establishment), thus providing opportunities for students not living close to UNC institutions. The collaboration with NC State and UNCW will also enhance access for the UNC System's students.

The proposed degree program will be the only graduate program in Spanish/Hispanic Studies in the state with a service learning requirement and an engaged research option in which students carry out a research project while performing service.

5. **Employment Opportunities for Graduates.** Labor market data from NC Works indicated opportunities for graduates in translation/interpretation and the education profession. Locally, BA graduates from the department have obtained employment from Vidant Medical Center and other institutions in these fields. The BLS projects that the field of interpretation/translation will grow 29% nationally between 2014 and 2024.
6. **Faculty Quality and Number.** The proposed degree program will require ECU to add four courses per semester to the department teaching schedule. However, two of the courses will be offered in combination with 4000-level undergraduate courses (i.e., same time, place, instructor, but individualized content and assignments appropriate for respective course levels). The department plans to meet the need with existing faculty and 8 teaching assistants.
7. **Availability of Campus Resources (library, space, etc.).** The J. Y. Joyner Library and William E. Laupus Health Sciences Library, collectively called ECU Libraries, serve students engaged in on-campus programs and distance education. Library orientations are provided through online tutorials, videos, and research guides. In addition, research assistance is available to all students. The faculty reviewed the reference and periodicals holdings, as well as electronic journals

available through JSTOR, Project MUSE, and ProQuest, deeming them sufficient for faculty and graduate research needs. Further resources are available through Interlibrary Services.

The department has a Sociolinguistics Lab, a Digital Institute for Scholarship in Social Sciences and the Humanities Lab, and a computer lab for students. Faculty have individual workstations and access to all necessary office equipment. Facilities are adequate, and the two-to-four more classrooms needed should not pose a space problem, especially since courses will most likely occur during the evenings to accommodate working students.

- 8. Relevant Lower-level and Cognate Programs.** The ECU Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures has a BA degree in Foreign Languages and Literatures and a graduate certificate in Hispanic Studies. The proposed program will also serve students from ECU's MA in International Studies and the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT), Hispanic Studies concentration. It is expected that the working K-12 educators will be interested in taking courses to maintain their licensure, as well as students from other undergraduate programs.
- 9. Impact on Access and Affordability.** The proposed degree program will not require differential tuition, enrollment growth funding, or program-specific fees.
- 10. Expected Quality.** The measures used to evaluate the proposed degree program will include enrollments, number of graduates, and student success. The institution will use the standard metrics for the first five years of the proposed degree program (enrollment, graduation rates, time-to-degree, etc.) supplied by ECU Institutional Planning, Assessment, and Research to determine whether the expected goals have been met.

The proposed program's assessment committee will review data each year by so that curricular changes can be made to strengthen the program, as standard procedure for all programs at ECU. The institution's Academic Council (comprised of the Provost, the Vice Chancellor for the Division of Health Sciences, and the Vice Chancellor for Research, Economic Development, and Engagement), also tracks a standard set of metrics regarding enrollment and degrees awarded for each of the first five years of program establishment. Further, a post-approval survey is conducted in year three for any program that has not gained specialized accreditation.

- 11. Feasibility of Collaborative Program.** NC State and UNCW have agreed to accept course credits from the proposed degree program. ECU will reciprocate, expanding access for prospective students.
- 12. Other Considerations.** Total tuition and fees for regular full-time resident graduate students at ECU are \$7,269.00. Total tuition and fees for regular full-time non-resident graduate students at ECU are \$20,418.00.

III. Summary of Review Processes

Campus Review Process and Feedback. The proposal was reviewed by the ECU faculty, department and university curriculum committees, provost, and chancellor. The institution obtained approval at each of those reviews.

UNC System Office Review Process and Feedback. Throughout the review process, ECU provided relevant information pertaining to program requirements and resources. The institution submitted appropriate documentation and research to support its statements. Reviewers evaluated the requests and found campus response to be appropriate.

IV. Recommendation

Approve ECU's request to establish a Master of Arts (M.A.) in Hispanic Studies degree program (CIP 16.0908) to enroll students starting Fall 2018.