

Request to Establish a Doctoral Program in Organizational Science at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Introduction

Following a recommendation from the Graduate Council and from the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs approved the request from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte to plan a doctoral program in Organizational Science in November 2004. The University of North Carolina at Charlotte now seeks approval to establish a doctoral program in Organizational Science (CIP: 30.9999) effective January 2006.

Program Description

Organizational Science is a field of inquiry and practice focusing on human wellbeing and performance in work settings. As an area of study, it assumes that a thorough understanding of organizations requires an interdisciplinary focus that crosses levels of analysis and incorporates theory from such diverse fields as psychology, management, sociology, and communication studies. As Organizational Science is both a science and a practice, enhanced understanding leads to applications and interventions that benefit the individual, the organization, the customer, and the larger community in which the organization operates.

Organizational Science is an emergent interdisciplinary field that addresses topics traditionally addressed from discipline-specific perspectives interested in a wide range of work-related topics. The specific topics of study in Organizational Science include, but are not limited to:

- *Team and Organizational Effectiveness*: organization culture and climate; group dynamics; cross-cultural issues; customer service; labor relations
- *Selection, Testing, and Promotion*: recruiting; test development; assessment centers; test fairness; hiring; consultation and expert testimony on EEO/AA, ADA, OSHA
- *Training and Development*: executive coaching; management development; training
- *Performance Evaluations*: design of job performance measurement systems for feedback and performance improvement, performance appraisal and management
- *Workplace Health*: ergonomics, human factors, and safety; overcoming stress
- *Employee Attitudes and Satisfaction*: empowerment; retention; job satisfaction; conflict and stress management; aging and retirement; turnover; organizational commitment
- *Compensation and Benefits*: pay; perks; rewards; recognition
- *Communication Effectiveness*: organizational communication design, processes and effectiveness; technology facilitated communications
- *Employee Motivation*: factors that motivate employees; job design and evaluation

- *Change Management*: mergers and acquisitions; process reengineering; productivity and quality improvement; downsizing
- *Employee Citizenship and Deviance*: harassment; bullying; pro-social behavior; violence
- *Work-Life Programs*: quality of work life; work-life balance; telecommuting

Organizational Science has its origin in four core disciplines:

Industrial/Organizational Psychology, Organizational Behavior/Human Resources Management, Organizational Sociology, and Organizational Communication.

An interdisciplinary Organizational Science approach should integrate the four perspectives to more fully understand the organizational phenomenon in question, thus positively impacting both science and application. It is important to recognize, however, that in its own right, each of the core disciplines comprising Organizational Science is thriving. Despite the success of the four respective disciplines, scholars in each discipline acknowledge that the potential impact of any one field on the world of work is mitigated to the extent that researchers and practitioners do not engage in systemic and integrative thinking and research.

An interdisciplinary perspective, therefore, should not only be an ideal in Organizational Science, but rather a fundamental necessity without which this emerging field of inquiry simply will fail to reach its potential. Overall, Organizational Science should capitalize on the individual success of its component disciplines, but at the same time fill an important integrative gap that exists in the broader discipline.

Intended Audience

Two main groups will be served by this doctoral program. The common denominator among these groups is a strong interest in learning about, researching, and working to improve human well-being and performance in organizations with an aim toward application.

- Principally, highly qualified students with undergraduate degrees will be eligible for admission into the program. These individuals may be recent graduates or returning professionals. Discipline-based prerequisites do not exist.
- Secondly, highly qualified students with master's degrees in highly related fields (e.g., I/O psychology) will be eligible for admission into the program. These individuals may be recent graduates or returning professionals.

Ideally, the student body will contain a mixture of recent graduates with an undergraduate degree, students with a master's degree in a highly related field, and professionals with significant work experience. This academic diversity, coupled with the demographic diversity the University presently enjoys, creates the ingredients for a highly stimulating intellectual environment.

Program Review

The review process is designed to surface strengths and weaknesses in proposed new degree programs. Proposals to establish new doctoral programs are reviewed internally and externally. The concerns from the two review processes were summarized in a letter to the Chancellor prior to the presentation to the Graduate Council. That summary follows:

Both external reviewers confirm that there will be an adequate pool of applicants and that job opportunities for graduates will be “rich, plentiful, and varied.” Let me identify two issues raised by Reviewer 1 then move to Reviewer 2 who has more detailed concerns and advice. Reviewer 1 thinks there will need to be continuing attention to keep balance among the four disciplines constituting the program, and that there will need to be explicit outreach activities to gain local support for internship opportunities.

Reviewer 2 raises a major concern regarding the level at which the program is cast. This reviewer believes that the program is unbalanced in the direction of the micro level, though there appears to be some confusion about how “macro” is used in the proposal. The reviewer bases this primarily on the research done by the faculty and reviewing the courses. She draws the conclusion that this potential hole in the training of a student who is working in business or industry may inadequately appreciate the “macro” forces at work in an organization. This appears to be an issue that may need to be addressed with additional courses or additional faculty. Reviewer 1 seems to support this analysis.

Reviewer 2 suggests the program rethink the internship/practicum. Not all students will need this, only those going to work in business or industry, but all will need research training, so reviewer 2 suggest the practicum be an option for those students only.

Both reviewers recognize the productivity of the faculty, but see it as weighted to the junior level. Additional faculty at the senior level is recommended to provide more balance and more sponsored research activity.

Finally, Reviewer 2 is concerned about the support particularly of graduate students, who she thinks will need a stipend of approximately \$24,000 to be attracted to the program.

Reviewer 2, who raises a number of important issues that need to be addressed, does conclude on a positive note that the proposal is well conceived and well written.

Graduate Council

The Graduate Council had, as a basis for its consideration, the proposal to plan the program, copies of the outside reviews of the program, the summary letter to the Chancellor, and a presentation to the Council by representatives of the program.

Response

Representatives of the program detailed the steps being taken to enhance the outreach of the program and the securing of internship sites, including involving the alumni in an

annual outreach event. The Industrial Organization program has a 20 year history of 100% placement of its students in internships. The program representative identified how the doctoral program would need to address micro, meso (middle range), and macro levels. Interest and work of the faculty are appropriately distributed at the three levels as are the core courses so students will have an opportunity to integrate all three levels/perspectives into their education. Not all students will need an internship but that will be determined on a case by case basis. Balance will be maintained by having all four departments and departmental representatives involved in all the work of the proposed program. Regarding level of the faculty, two faculty will be promoted to full professor by the time the program starts, and two new hires are in the works, one at the associate level and one at the full professor level.

Need for the Program

The program has documented that there will be both a pool of good applicants for the program and good opportunities for employment for its graduates. This is confirmed by both external reviewers.

Resources

The program will be supported through internal reallocations, grant funds, and enrollment expansion funds from the state. By 2007-08 the campus expects to reallocate \$500,000 to this program and the will generate a requirement of \$379,573 from enrollment expansion funding for this program. The portion for state funding will be determined by the amount of tuition paid which in turn depends on the in state/out of state mix.

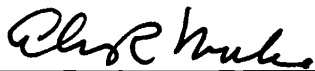
Recommendation by the Graduate Council

After consideration of the issues raised by reviewers and Council members, the Graduate Council voted, without dissent, to recommend approval for the University of North Carolina at Charlotte to establish a doctoral program in Organizational Science.

Recommendation

The General Administration recommends that the Board of Governors approve the request from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte to establish a doctoral program in Organizational Science.

Approved to be Recommended for Establishment to the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs



Acting Senior Vice President for AA Alan Mabe

January 4, 2006