

Request for Authorization to Establish a Master of Construction Management Degree at East Carolina University

Introduction

East Carolina University notified UNC General Administration of its intent to plan a Master of Construction Management (MCM) degree (CIP 15.1001) in March 2005. ECU requests authorization to establish the program in August 2006.

Program Description

The proposed MCM is a 30-semester hour program that will be offered through distance education. The program is designed to bring practicing construction managers to higher levels of knowledge and proficiency in the use of managerial tools, concepts, and processes for complex construction projects. Construction as a profession is undergoing dramatic changes with complex technology and computer applications, new materials and processes, laws, cost containment, environmental and land use issues, quality systems, and human resource management. The program will also prepare a few of its graduates to teach as community college faculty. ECU's undergraduate program in construction management is one of the campus's fastest growing majors and has an excellent reputation in academic and with the construction industry. The Department of Construction Management has collaborated with its Construction Management Advisory Council (individuals from major construction companies across the US) to develop a curriculum for a master's degree that meets the expressed needs of the industry.

Program Need

Master's-prepared, upper-level construction management personnel are in high demand as the sophistication of construction rapidly changes due to new technologies, processes, and equipment. Large numbers of management personnel are leaving the industry due to retirement or inability to change with the industry. Regional and national economies are dependent on the construction profession, which accounts for 18 percent of the Gross National Product. Approximately one-half of the 1,341 undergraduate construction management program alumni have graduated in the last six years, and all are potential candidates for the program. The program is viewed as an important way that ECU can contribute to its goal of fostering economic development in eastern NC. It is anticipated that after four years 75 part-time students will be enrolled in the program.

Resources

Two courses for the program currently exist and eight more will be developed. Current faculty will teach the graduate program, although the department is hiring three additional faculty to take over responsibilities in the undergraduate program. One additional faculty person will be hired for the graduate program. The program will be a distance education program, and the College of Technology and Computer Science has an excellent record of supporting such programs through technology, technology support, and delivery facilities. The only needed facilities will be office space for new faculty. Program needs will be funded through enrollment growth funding.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the request to establish a Master of Construction Management at East Carolina University effective August 2006.