

APPENDIX N

Request for Authorization to Establish a Master of Science Degree in Athletic Training at East Carolina University

Introduction

ECU notified UNC-GA of its intent to plan an MS in Athletic Training (CIP 51.0913) in March 2006. ECU requests authorization to establish this degree effective December 2006.

Program Description

The proposed program is being developed to meet accreditation standards of the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA). It is a 40-semester-hour, two-year program consisting of 31 hours of core classes and a choice of a 9-hour thesis or master's project. Clinically, the program is separated into two rotations: the first year assigned to on-campus clinical sites and the second year used for off-campus rotations. Students will study athletic training management and administration; enhance clinical proficiency; explain, evaluate, and apply current research; analyze ethical standards in athletic training; and develop knowledge and skills for teaching athletic training students. Roles of certified athletic trainers are divided into six domains: injury prevention; injury recognition, evaluation, and assessment; emergency care; treatment, rehabilitation, and reconditioning; organization and administration; and professional development.

Program Need

There are 350 accredited undergraduate athletic training programs in the US but only 12 accredited graduate programs despite the fact that 70 percent of athletic trainers have a master's degree or higher. Graduates of the master's program will be prepared to work in clinics, high schools, colleges, and universities as athletic trainers, training directors, and faculty. Including ECU's undergraduate program (one of the country's oldest and most successful), there are 19 accredited entry-level athletic training programs in NC, and ECU will recruit students from these programs to meet the needs of North Carolina. In addition to the 45 NCAA-affiliated higher education institutions in NC, there are 361 high schools, only a quarter of which have certified athletic trainers. The NC Department of Public Instruction is considering requiring a state-licensed athletic trainer in each high school. It is anticipated that the program will enroll 25-30 full-time students.

Resources

With the addition of a new faculty member in fall 2005, both the undergraduate and proposed graduate programs will have sufficient faculty to offer all required classes on a regular basis. With four on-campus athletic training facilities, there is ample room for appropriate learning and supervision of students. Additional athletic training research laboratory space is being secured for August 2006, and needed equipment is being secured through faculty start-up funds, department funds, and enrollment growth funding.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the request to establish an MS in Athletic Training (CIP 51.0913) at East Carolina University effective December 2006.