

Oct. II

CHE  
10/6/2005  
Agenda Item 4.02A.2

**New Program Proposal  
Bachelor of Arts in Communication  
Coastal Carolina University**

**Summary**

Coastal Carolina University requests approval to offer a program leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication, to be implemented in Spring 2006.

The proposal was approved by the Coastal Carolina University Board of Trustees on May 6, 2005, and submitted for Commission review on May 12, 2005. The proposal was reviewed and voted upon favorably by the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs at its meeting on July 14, 2005. During the review, several questions were raised. Two of the questions were based on the assumption that the program would have high enough enrollment to require additional faculty members and an increased budget for technology. Coastal's response in the meeting and in a follow-up written document was that the institution was committed to supporting the program as it grows. The institution states that technology is adequately supported, as the program is not technology-oriented. An additional faculty member is already in the budget, and if the program grows sufficiently, the institution will add faculty necessary to support the program.

Questions were also raised about the related issues of program focus and the choice of accrediting body. Coastal has stated that the program has a broad focus on "a general study of human communication, reinforced and expanded by an approved minor and an appropriate internship experience." Coastal also stated that it will explore avenues of accreditation that fit the goals of the program but that are offered by CHE-approved accrediting bodies.

According to the proposal, the purpose of the program is to "prepare students to analyze human communication and to be effective facilitators of communication in a variety of contexts. The program will be offered through the Department of English, Journalism and Communications in the Thomas W. and Robin W. Edwards College of Humanities and Fine Arts. The proposed program will require both a minor and an internship, unlike other programs at Coastal Carolina.

The proposed program is consistent with Coastal's efforts to provide a wide range of majors which reflect the nature and growth of the region, and which, according to the proposal, will "promote CCU's mission to provide a rational view of the world and human experience through student-centered participatory learning and to help students

make intelligent, informed decisions as free, active citizens in modern society." The proposal states that prospective students ask about Communications more than any other major not offered in the curriculum. The Communications minor has drawn enough interest and enrollment that a new tenure track faculty member has been hired and will begin in Fall 2005. The proposal cites research from the National Association of Colleges and Employers that states that the top five qualities employers want in their employees are communication skills, honesty and integrity, teamwork skills, interpersonal skills, and motivation skills. The proposal goes on to state that the proposed program, through its course curriculum and internship, will provide the desired skills. The proposal also presents U. S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics information that states that management and public relations are among the top ten industries with the fastest wage and salary employment growth for 2000-2010.

The proposed program will build on the current Coastal minors available in Communications and Journalism, with courses from those programs being used to support the major. In addition, the required minor will allow students to focus on areas of application for the Communication major. The Communication major is found in eight other public four-year institutions in the state, with the exception of USC-Beaufort. It is also found in 11 private institutions in the state, including Coker College but not Charleston Southern University. CHEMIS data and staff research indicate that it is one of the largest majors at the College of Charleston and that the graduates in this major are sought after by employers. Many programs similar to the proposed program exist in other states.

The curriculum consists of 120 credit hours. Of these, 44-52 hours are in core courses, 4-21 are electives, six are in foundation courses, and 31 are major requirements. The institution anticipates adding one new course to support the program, a research and thesis course. All other courses for the degree are currently in the CCU catalog of courses.

The proposal indicates that one new full-time faculty will be hired for this program in its second year. The University anticipates that the program will require the use of five existing faculty (3 FTE) in the first year, increasing to six (4.5 FTE) by the fifth year. Current faculty hold degrees in Journalism and Mass Communication (Ph.D.), Human Communication (Ph.D.), Speech and Business (M.S.), Linguistics (Ph.D.), and Composition and Rhetoric (Ph.D.). No new administrative or staff positions will be created in the first five years.

Enrollment in the proposed program is estimated to begin at 19 headcount students (19 FTE) in FY 2005-2006 and increase to 22 headcount (22 FTE) by FY 2010-11. Estimates are based on the number of students currently enrolled in the BAIS program with a minor in Communication, other students who have expressed interest in the program, and on information on interest in the program received from transfer

students. If enrollment projections are met, the program will meet the current CHE program productivity standards for enrollment.

The proposed program is not subject to specialized accreditation. The proposal states that the program will seek voluntary accreditation through the American Communication Association (ACA). It should be noted that the ACA is not recognized as an accrediting agency by either the Council on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or the U.S. Department of Education. In response to questions raised at the ACAP meeting, the University is exploring other options for accreditation such as the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, the accrediting body for USC Columbia's and Winthrop's programs.

The proposed program will require no new class or office space over the next five years.

Coastal Carolina University indicates that its library holdings in communication lag behind those of its in-state peers (Francis Marion University and Lander University). The Kimbel Library currently holds 250,000 items in all formats, including electronic full-text periodicals and fifty on-line reference sources. The proposal budgets \$2,100 per year over the next five years to increase holdings in communication-related areas, for a total of \$10,500.

New costs for the program are estimated to begin at \$2,100 in year one, all for library resources. Estimated new costs increase to \$51,600 in year two, in the areas of faculty salaries (\$47,000), library resources (\$2,100), and equipment (\$2,500). New costs decrease slightly in year three with faculty salaries (\$48,410) and library resources (\$2,100), and hold steady except for salary increases for the faculty position. Total new costs for the first five years of the program are estimated at \$209,630.

Shown below are the estimated Mission Resource Requirement (MRR) costs to the state and new costs not funded by the MRR associated with implementation of the proposed program for its first five years. Also shown are the estimated revenues projected under the MRR and the Resource Allocation Plan as well as student tuition.

Year	Estimated MRR Cost for Proposed Program	Extraordinary (Non-MRR) Costs for Proposed Program	Total Costs	State Appropriation	Tuition
Year 1	\$112,392		\$112,392	\$0	\$95,524
Year 2	\$112,392		\$112,392	19,393	\$95,524
Year 3	\$118,636		\$118,636	19,393	\$100,602
Year 4	\$118,636		\$118,636	20,516	\$100,602
Year 5	\$124,880		\$124,880	20,516	\$106,504

These data demonstrate that if Coastal Carolina University can meet the projected student enrollments as they are shown in the proposal, the program will not be able to cover new costs with revenues it generates by the fifth year of its implementation.

In summary, Coastal Carolina University requests approval to offer a program leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree (B.A.) in Communication that will provide its graduates with varied communication skills for the business environment. The program is being proposed to meet both high student interest in a Communications major at Coastal and the need of local businesses for employees with the strong communication skills and experience. The program, to be implemented in Spring 2006, will be offered through the Department of English, Journalism and Communications in the Thomas W. and Robin W. Edwards College of Humanities and Fine Arts.

### **Recommendation**

The Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing recommends that the Commission approve the proposed program leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication at Coastal Carolina University for implementation in Spring 2006, provided that no "unique cost" or other special State funding be requested or required.