

APPENDIX F
THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO PLAN A NEW
DISTANCE EDUCATION DEGREE PROGRAM

THE PURPOSE OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM PLANNING: Planning a distance education degree program provides an opportunity for an institution to make the case for need and demand and for its ability to offer a quality program. This notification and planning activity to follow do not guarantee that authorization to establish will be granted.

Date: Draft 1/18/13

Constituent Institution: East Carolina University
CIP Discipline Specialty Title: Communication Studies/Speech Communication and Rhetoric
CIP Discipline Specialty Number: 09.0101 Level: M
Exact Title of the Proposed Program: Communication
Degree Abbreviation: MA Proposed Date of Initiation: August 2014

Will this program be completely individual access (e.g., online, videocassette, etc.)? Yes
If "yes," primary mode of delivery: Online

If cohort-based, length of time to complete the sequence (e.g., 18 mos., 2 years): N/A

Substantive change must be reported to the Commission on Colleges of SACS using either the Procedure 1 (report and approval) or Procedure 2 (report) protocol. Which one will apply may depend on the current programs already approved by the Commission on Colleges for the campus.

Site-based (where instructor is present):

Is the institution initiating instruction where student may earn more than 25% and less 50% of credits toward a degree at an off-campus site? (Procedure 2) No

Is the institution initiating an (additional) off-campus site at which students may earn 50% or more of an educational program? (Procedure 1) No

Is the institution adding significantly different degree programs at a currently approved site? (Procedure 2) No

Distance learning (where instructor and student are geographically separated):

Is the institution offering its first credit courses via technology-based instruction by which students can obtain at least 25% of credits toward a degree program? (Procedure 2) No

Is the institution expanding a previously reported program from less than 50% of credits to 50% or more of a degree program? (Procedure 2) No

Is the institution adding a significantly different program from previously reported programs offered via technology-based instruction? (Procedure 2) No

If this action constitutes a substantive change, by what date should SACS be notified? n/a

1. Briefly describe the proposed program and intended audience.

The ECU School of Communication proposes to offer our current program via distance education (DE) in order to meet the needs of students who are unable to come to campus for our continuing face to face program. We propose to admit 8 to 12 students beginning in fall of 2014. The program would be ongoing after that.

We believe this program will appeal, in particular, to people in the health field who would like additional training in communication theory and practice. There are many individuals who work in the commercial and not-for-profit sectors in health that would benefit from additional

education in communication. For instance, many not-for-profit organizations use the media to provide information to the public and attempt to persuade them to take up positive health behaviors. Courses in social influence and media and health could better equip these individuals.

2. Describe the proposed instructional delivery systems (e.g., on-site instruction, interactive video, Internet, etc., including combinations of these).

We intend to deliver the program via Blackboard and other instructional delivery software such as Tegrity, Camtasia, and Centra.

3. Describe need for the program (referencing results of surveys or special studies). If site-based, is any other institution (public or private) offering a similar program in the location(s)? If online, are any other UNC institutions offering a similar online program?

The School of Communication started its master of arts program in communication with an emphasis on health in the fall of 2006. The program is now in its seventh year and has graduated 71 students (as of December 2012). Currently, there are 20+ full-time and part-time students. After graduation, some students pursued a teaching career in academia or continued studying in other fields, while many found their jobs in health communication related fields. Our graduates have been placed in competitive positions throughout the US. Some examples follow: Manager, Center for Health Literacy, Maximus – Virginia; Communication Coordinator at Blue Cross Blue Shield of NC in Chapel Hill; Health Communication and Marketing Consultant, Center for Disease Control—Atlanta; Project Assistant at Pharmaceutical Product Development; Coordinator for University Wellness, Frostburg State University; Nursing Home Administrator, StoneCreek Health & Rehabilitation – North Carolina; Director of Development and Communications, College of Education, ECU; Research Assistant, Medical College of Georgia; Doctoral Candidate, Gonzaga University; Academic Advisor, East Carolina University .

In summer 2012, Dr. Sachiyo Shearman, Associate Professor in the School of Communication, conducted a feasibility study for taking parts or all of our current graduate program online. The participants of this study were the potential target audience, which included current and former undergraduate and graduate students at ECU (in various related fields besides communication), and health professionals in North Carolina. Specifically, this study examined the possibility of offering an online master of arts degree in communication, an online certificate program in health communication, or other ways of offering selected graduate level online courses. This study recommended that the School of Communication aim to offer the current MA program in communication in a fully online delivery format, based on evidence of need gathered over the course of the study. We have attached an executive summary of the feasibility study for reference.

If approved, ECU's MA in communication with an emphasis in health communication online program would be the only one of its kind in the UNC system offered via distance education.

Projected total annual enrollment: Years 1 8-12 2 8-12 3 8-12 4 12-15 5 12-15

4. Name, title, telephone, and e-mail of contact person to respond to questions:

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This intent to plan a new distance education degree program (or program site) has been reviewed and approved by the appropriate campus committees and authorities, including the Chief Academic Officer.