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: March 29, 2013

Constituent Institution: East Carolina University
CIP Discipline Specialty Title: General Studies
CIP Discipline Specialty Number: 24.0102 Level: B
Exact Title of the Proposed Degree: Bachelor of Science in University Studies
Degree Abbreviation: BS   Proposed Date of Initiation: August 2014

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

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

In 2002, ECU received this notification from SACS "Inasmuch as these degree programs are well established at the institution and given the Commissions' approval of technology-mediated instruction at ECU, this delivery mode is included within the scope of the institution's accreditation. No further information is requested."

1. Briefly describe the proposed program and intended audience.

   The Bachelor of Science in University Studies (BSUS) is a university-wide program designed for students who seek a unique course of study outside traditional majors. This program offers the opportunity for students to develop an integrated, yet individualized, program of study that is personally interesting and professionally relevant within specific institutional guidelines. The BSUS degree is intended for students whose goals and interests for education are not met by current degree programs and offers avenues for academic innovation and accomplishment of 21st century educational goals.

The BSUS program supports the university's commitment to access by removing barriers to university completion for many students and enhances its ability to provide students with rich opportunities for meeting individual career or academic interests. Specifically, it addresses student success through increased retention and graduation rates, and provides a pathway for personal and professional development by allowing students to craft majors that better fit their intended skill sets.

A Faculty Oversight Committee, representing a diverse group of faculty across the university, will be chosen to provide attention to the academic integrity of the courses chosen to comprise a thematic core. Care will be taken by the Faculty Oversight Committee that thematic cores are not designed and/or approved that in any way attempt to circumvent existing majors. The academic integrity of the program will be a function of the way in which the Committee provides oversight to the processes and policies that govern the development and implementation of the thematic cores.

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

   The program will be delivered via the Internet utilizing Blackboard as the course management system.

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 proposed BSUS meets the needs of students whose goals and interests for education are not met by current degree programs. It provides a pathway for personal and professional development by allowing students to craft majors that better fit their intended skill sets. There is an increasing number of students, particularly those who have served in the military, who have attended various institutions and accumulate academic credits that cannot efficiently be applied to more traditional degree programs. Limitations on financial aid for these students prohibit many from completing the requirements for traditional programs. This program will ensure greater access and completion rates for students and provide them the opportunity to succeed in an increasingly competitive environment. It offers avenues for academic innovation and accomplishment of 21st century educational goals regardless of the age, ability or circumstances of students.

   During the 2008-2009 academic year, the university engaged in a year-long Strategic Enrollment Management Task Force (SEMTF) study to help direct East Carolina University (ECU) enrollment planning and student success. Four major issues were identified that impact ECU's success including "Improving Student Retention and Graduation." A key recommendation of the Task Force report, accepted by the ECU Board of Trustees in February 2009, was item 2.7.4. Establish a degree in University Studies.

   In a survey conducted by Hart Research (January 20, 2010), entitled *"Raising the Bar: Employers' Views on College Learning in the Wake of the Economic Downturn),"* 302 employers indicated the skills and knowledge they wanted from college graduates. Results of the report, which was commissioned by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, indicated they value skills and abilities at least as much as specific major-related skills. Among the skills that they indicate as of increasing value are in the "intellectual and practical" realm:

   - The ability to communicate effectively, orally and in writing (89%);
   - Critical thinking and analytical reasoning skills (81%);
   - The ability to analyze and solve complex problems (75%);
   - Teamwork skills and the ability to collaborate with others in diverse group settings (70%);
   - The ability to be innovative and creative (70%);

- The ability to locate, organize and evaluate information from multiple sources (68%);
- The ability to work with numbers and understand statistics (63%)

CIP Code	Program Title	Campus
24.0101	Liberal Studies	UNC Greensboro
24.0102	Interdisciplinary Studies	Winston-Salem State University
24.0199	General Studies and Humanities	NC State University

4. Projected total annual enrollment: Years 1) 25 2) 40 3) 60 4)80 5)100

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.