

## APPENDIX G

### THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

#### REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION TO ESTABLISH A NEW DISTANCE EDUCATION DEGREE PROGRAM OR SITE (THROUGH WHICH 50% OR MORE OF A DEGREE PROGRAM IS PROVIDED)

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Fill in the appropriate blanks and expand the electronic version of this form as required to include other more extensive information. Please submit three copies of the proposal to General Administration. As of January 1, 2010 submission of proposals will be electronic.

Date: Draft 11/13/13

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

List any other UNC institutions that offer similar programs in the same location (if requesting a site-based program) or a similar program online or by individual access (if requesting an individual access program):

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.

*For the following question, please consult "Guidelines for Alternative, Online, or Distance Education Delivery of approved Degree Programs" from the UNC Policy Manual available on the UNC GA Academic Planning website.*

One N/A (prior authorization from SACS; both Appendix F and G should be submitted to COC of SACS by the institution, if applicable)

Two N/A (prior notification to SACS; Appendix F should be submitted to COC of SACS by the institution, if applicable)

Based on the SACS policy on substantive change, by what date should the campus be notified by UNC-GA of authorization to establish? 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."

*The following items conform to the information required for SACS Substantive Change Procedure One.*

1. Abstract (limit to one page or less)

Describe the proposed change; its location; initial date of implementation; projected number of students; description of primary target audience; projected life of the program (single cohort [indicate number of years] or ongoing); and instructional delivery methods.

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 intend to deliver the program via Blackboard and other course management systems. We propose to admit 10 to 12 students beginning in fall of 2014. The program would be ongoing after that.

Our target audience for this DE program would be working professionals who are unable to come to campus for our face-to-face program. 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.

In 2012 the ECU Program Prioritization Committee was charged with conducting a self-examination of academic programming and administration. In their *Recommendations* the PPC labeled our MA in Communication with an Emphasis in Health Communication an “invest.” They wrote “This alignment with campus health-related programs is strongly encouraged. Strong opportunity for on-line development.”

2. Background information

Provide a clear statement of the nature and purpose of the change in the context of the institution’s mission, goals, and strategic plan; evidence of the legal authority for the change (*to be provided by UNC General Administration in authorization letter*).

For more than 65 years, the mission of East Carolina University has included support of courses and degree programs for students located beyond the borders of the campus. Historically, these off-campus programs were offered at specific sites and outreach centers, often involving the placement of university support staff, teaching faculty, and resources at locations such as military bases and community colleges.

East Carolina University engaged a variety of resources to establish direction, guiding principles, and support systems required to appropriately respond to the state’s commitment to improved access to higher education. Faculty and administrators provided considerable input.

Major strategies emerging from these planning efforts included:

- Commitment to focus on delivery of complete academic programs instead of a random selection of courses
- Commitment to use regular campus faculty, not adjuncts, to deliver most courses
- Investment in student and faculty support services to facilitate development and deployment of academic programs
- Investment in an infrastructure and services to support electronically offered courses
- Development of a planning process prior to approving programs to be offered in distance education format

Distance education is now at the very core of the way ECU operates. The DE initiative has brought an added richness and diversity to the campus. DE funding has brought significant number of new tenure track faculty members to the campus and has invigorated academic discussions in every academic unit.

Incoming students, traditional and non-traditional, will expect to learn at some level online, if not completely online. ECU's ability to be globally ready, to provide access to all citizens, to improve public education, to serve to transform and sustain the economies of its regions, and to be a major influence in the improvement of healthcare in eastern North Carolina depends on how well it embraces, supports, manages, and deploys distance education and online learning both on campus as well as off campus.

*ECU Tomorrow: A Vision for Leadership and Service* stands as ECU's long-range strategic plan. This plan approved by the Board of Trustees, sets forth ECU's mission, vision, values, five strategic directions, and core competencies. The UNC Board of Governors approved ECU's new mission statement in November 2009.

ECU's first strategic direction as published in "ECU Tomorrow" is Education for a New Century. Increasing access to higher education is seen as one of the university's core competencies. Listed there are the goals:

- We will expand our distance education programs, delivering a high-quality East Carolina education to the thousands of North Carolinians who cannot be campus residents.
- We will tailor programs to the needs of working adults through distance education models.
- We will make an East Carolina education accessible to prospective students and reach out to those who might otherwise be unable to achieve their educational potential.
- We are committed to increasing access to higher education for all students.

One of the goals of UNC Strategic Plan "Our Time Our Future" is to serve the needs of the people of North Carolina. One of the strategies associated with this goal is to address the state's health care needs by training the next generation of medical and health professionals. There is a critical need to better understand and address persistent health disparities in rural North Carolina and to prepare students to work in a broad array of health fields in rural North Carolina, providing inter-professional, community-based teaching sites for students.

The proposed program is also in alignment with the ECU mission in regards to using innovative learning strategies and delivery methods to maximize access, expressed in *ECU Mission Statement* pending Board of Governor's approval.

- *To be a national model for students success, public service and regional transformation, East Carolina University;*
- *Uses innovative learning strategies and delivery methods to maximize access;*
- *Prepares students with the knowledge, skills and values to succeed in a global, multicultural society;*
- *Develops tomorrow's leaders to serve and inspire positive change;*
- *Transforms health care, promotes wellness, and reduces health disparities; and*
- *Improves quality of life through cultural enrichment, academics, the arts, and athletics.*

We anticipate that the proposed DE delivery of our MA in Communication with an Emphasis in Health Communication will work, in particular, to address item #5 above, transforming health care, promoting wellness, and working to reduce health disparities.

### 3. Assessment of need and program planning/approval

Discuss the rationale for the change, including intended audience and an assessment of need (*include results of surveys or special studies*), evidence of inclusion of the change in the institution's ongoing planning and evaluation processes; and documentation that faculty and other groups were involved in the review and approval of the new site or program.

In summer 2012, Dr. Sachiyo Shearman, Associate Professor in the School of Communication, conducted a feasibility study for offering our current face-to-face MA program via distance education.

The participants of this study were the potential target audience, including current and former ECU students and health professionals in North Carolina. 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 both the executive summary of the feasibility study and the full study for reference.

In addition to receiving funding for the above feasibility study, in spring 2012, the School of Communication received funding to develop two online graduate courses that were marketed to graduate students in health programs, including students in Health Education and Promotion, Public Health, and Nutrition, among others. These courses have been well received on campus and filled easily from students outside of Communication.

School of Communication faculty and graduate students have engaged in a number of collaborations across campus. For example, one of our graduate students was funded through the Center for Health Disparities Research (CHDR) to work on a breast cancer research grant. Several of our faculty are members of the College of Fine Arts and Communication Core within the CHDR. Several of our faculty are also involved in collaborative opportunities with faculty in the Department of Public Health (DPH) at Brody School of Medicine. For example, Communication faculty member Dr. Mary Tucker-McLaughlin is working with DPH faculty members on a grant from the Robert Wood Johnston Foundation to study the impact of the County Health Rankings report in North Carolina from 2012-2013.

Each of the University's distance education programs begins in the academic department. Faculty members work with staff from the Office of Continuing Studies to begin the planning process. Each program has a coordinator that is a full time faculty member. They develop a program design that includes both the instructional requirements and the academic resources available to meet the needs of a widely dispersed group of students.

They work to insure that prospective students are made aware of the programs available to them and student services to support these programs are incorporated into the planning process. The Office of Institutional Planning, Assessment and Research insures that university surveys are made available to distance education students and that their participation is encouraged.

The proposals are referred to the Academic Program Development Collaborative Team (APDC Team), an advisory body to the Academic Council. The Office of Academic Affairs, Office of Institutional Planning, Assessment and Research, Graduate School, Office of Continuing Studies, Division of Research and Graduate Studies, Division of Health Sciences, Educational Policies and Planning Committee, Undergraduate and Graduate Curriculum Committees as well as the Faculty Senate Chair are represented. A unit proposing a new degree program begins the on campus review process by presenting the appropriate planning and establishing documents to the APDC Team, which will collaborate with the unit to strengthen the proposal. The APDC Team advises the provost on all new academic program proposals submitted as well as advises the Dean of the Graduate School on graduate programs under consideration. The Educational Policies and Planning Committee (EPPC) is informed of those recommendations.

The proposal is then reviewed by the EPPC, a standing committee of the faculty senate and then referred to the academic council. EPPC oversees the adequacy, balance, and excellence of the University's overall undergraduate and graduate programs; advises the Chancellor on educational policies and organizations, goals, standards and procedures; reviews requests for permission to plan and establish new degree programs.

The Academic Council includes the provost and senior vice chancellor for academic affairs, the vice chancellor for research and graduate studies, and the vice chancellor for health sciences. The Academic Council considers the APDC Team's and EPPC recommendations on new academic degree program proposal and makes recommendations to the chancellor.

Provide projected annual headcount enrollment:

Individual access:        Years 1) 10 2) 10 3) 12 4) 15 5) 15

Projected total SCHs (all sites):

<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Student Credit Hours</b>		
<b>Program Category</b>	<b>UG</b>	<b>Master's</b>	<b>Doctoral</b>
Category I		180	
Category II			
Category III			
Category IV			

<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Student Credit Hours</b>		
<b>Program Category</b>	<b>UG</b>	<b>Master's</b>	<b>Doctoral</b>
Category I		180	
Category II			
Category III			
Category IV			

<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Student Credit Hours</b>		
<b>Program Category</b>	<b>UG</b>	<b>Master's</b>	<b>Doctoral</b>
Category I		216	
Category II			
Category III			
Category IV			

<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Student Credit Hours</b>		
<b>Program Category</b>	<b>UG</b>	<b>Master's</b>	<b>Doctoral</b>
Category I		270	
Category II			
Category III			
Category IV			

4. Description of the substantive change (as required by SACS)

Provide a description of the proposed change, including description of the proposed program, specific outcomes and learning objectives and curriculum and schedule of proposed course offering. 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 believe this program will appeal, in particular, to people currently in health careers seeking graduate education in communication theory and practice. We propose to admit 10 to 12 students beginning in fall of 2014. The program would be ongoing after that.

The mission of our master of arts in communication is to provide students with in-depth knowledge of communication while emphasizing both conceptual and applied information in health communication. Ultimately, the School prepares individuals for professional and academic careers in areas related to the intersection between health and communication.

Students completing the master of arts degree in communication will be able to:

1. Apply the concepts and theories that guide communication research and practice.
2. Utilize research methods common in communication research.
3. Analyze the role of individuals and/or institutions in communication.
4. Interpret the effects of communication on interpersonal relationships, organizations, and/or mass audiences.

5. Identify the ethical components of communication, which may include interpersonal relationships, organizations, and/or mass audiences.

For health communication specifically, all students will have knowledge and skills designed to address at least two of the following:

6. Evaluate the role of communication in health-related decision-making.
7. Address communication issues that exist between and among patients, providers, and family members.
8. Explain the dynamics of social support through communication.
9. Create and disseminate health information.
10. Evaluate communication within healthcare organizations.
11. Interpret the multiple influences of culture on health communication.

For successful completion, our MA program requires, and will continue to require, 30 total credit hours, composed of the following:

1. Core		18 s.h.*
<u>Required Courses</u>	<u>9 s.h.</u>	
COMM 6000: Communication Theory		
COMM 6030: Research Methods		
COMM 6230: Introduction to Health Communication		
<u>Choose 9 s.h. from the following courses</u>	<u>9 s.h.</u>	
COMM 6210: Media and Health Communication		
COMM 6220: Interpersonal Health Communication		
COMM 6221: Intercultural Communication in Health Contexts		
COMM 6224: Communication and Health Organizations		
COMM 6226: Communication Approaches to Health Advocacy		
COMM 6240: Special Topics in Health Communication		
2. Options		12 s.h.
A. Thesis Option		
<u>COMM 7000: Thesis</u>	<u>3-6 s.h.</u>	
<u>Electives**</u>	<u>6-9 s.h.</u>	
B. Non-thesis Option		
<u>Electives**</u>	<u>12 s.h.</u>	

\* s.h. = semester hours

\*\*Electives should be chosen in consultation with the Graduate Program Director. Students may take up to 6 semester hours outside the School of Communication. Three of the outside hours may be at the 5000 level or higher. Additional hours must be at the 6000 level or higher.

Describe and provide rationale for any differences in admission, curriculum, or graduation requirements for students enrolled online or at the new site(s), or any special arrangements for grading, transcripts, or transfer policies. N/A

Describe administrative oversight to ensure the quality of the program or services to be offered.

Our online program will have no significant differences in admission, curriculum, or graduation requirements for students enrolled online, nor any special arrangements for grading, transcripts, or transfer policies.

Academically qualified persons participate in all decision making concerning curriculum and program oversight. Permanent faculty members of ECU are responsible for presentation, management, and

assessment of all distance education degree programs. A program coordinator is assigned for each degree program, whether offered on campus or electronically. Each program coordinator is a full-time ECU faculty member. An assessment team representative from the academic discipline coordinates assessment of all on-campus and electronically offered degrees in the discipline.

Assessment of distance learning is fully integrated into the university-wide assessment program. Faculty and administrators within academic units oversee all distance education programs to ensure quality and content. Academically, there is no distinction between courses taught on campus and those taught via distance education. All participants must meet the same course objectives and demonstrate the same learning outcomes. The curriculum and evaluation of DE courses, however delivered, are conducted under the same procedures and personnel as on-campus courses. The academic unit establishes the intended learning outcomes, the means of assessment, and the criteria for success, and carries out the assessment activities for both the campus and DE programs.

This program will be offered on a part-time basis with scheduled degree completion approximately 2 to 3 years per student. Two courses will be offered in fall, spring, and summer.

A sample schedule of a student's course work according to a 3 year plan is as follows:

Year 1

Fall, COMM 6000: Communication Theory

Spring, COMM 6030: Research Methods

Summer, COMM 6221: Intercultural Communication in Health Contexts

Summer, 2 - Elective courses

Year 2

Fall, COMM 6230: Intro to Health Communication

Spring, COMM 6210: Media and Health Communication

Summer, COMM 6220: Interpersonal Health Communication

Year 3

Fall, COMM Elective

Spring, COMM Elective

Summer, Elective course and comprehensive exams

A sample schedule of a student's course work according to a 2 year plan is as follows:

Year1

Fall, COMM 6000: Communication Theory

Fall, COMM 6230: Intro to Health Communication

Spring, COMM 6030: Research Methods

Spring, COMM 6210:

Summer, COMM Elective

Summer, COMM 6221: Intercultural Communication in Health contexts

Year 2

Fall, COMM 6226: Communication Approaches to Health Advocacy

Fall, COMM Elective

Spring, COMM 6210: Media and Health Communication

Spring, Free Elective

Summer, COMM 6220: Interpersonal Health Communication

Summer, Free Elective and comprehensive exams

5. Faculty and support staff

Please Provide:

Number of faculty expected to deliver instruction: full-time faculty 19 part-time faculty 0 :

A complete roster (using the SACS “Roster of Instructional Staff” form) of those faculty employed to teach in the program, including a description of those faculty members’ academic qualifications and course load in the proposed program, as well as course work taught in other programs currently offered;

**ROSTER OF INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF**

The below faculty members all have terminal degrees in communication and are faculty credentialed with the CIP code 0901 (00 – Communication General; 01 Speech Communication/ Rhetoric); 02--Mass Communication-Media Studies) for the designated unit.

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
NAME (F, P)	COURSES TAUGHT Including Term, Course Number & Title, Credit Hours (D, UN, UT, G)	ACADEMIC DEGREES& COURSEWORK Relevant to Courses Taught, Including Institution & Major List specific graduate coursework, if needed	OTHER QUALIFICATIONS & COMMENTS Related to Courses Taught
Rebecca Dumlao, Professor (F)	COMM 6220: Interpersonal Health Communication (3, G, spring) COMM 6221: Intercultural Communication in Health Contexts (3,G, fall) COMM 6140: Special Topics in Communication (3,G, schedule varies)	PhD in Mass Communications CIP 0901-02  1997, University of Wisconsin, Madison	Family communication; communication and community engagement.
Cindy Elmore, Associate Professor (F)		PhD in Mass Communication CIP-0901-02  2003, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill	Journalism; journalist job satisfaction and turnover; gender differences in journalism content; and the military newspaper, the Stars and Stripes.
Festus Eribo, Professor (F)		PhD in Mass Communications CIP 0901-02  1989, University of Wisconsin, Madison	International communication; media ethics; and press freedom.
Todd Fraley, Associate Professor (F)	COMM 6000: Communication Theory (3,G, fall)	PhD in Mass Communication CIP 0901-02 2004, University of Georgia, Athens	Media and democracy; politics of representation; alternative media; and popular culture.
Linda Freeman, Assistant Professor (F)		PhD Communication Studies CIP 0901-00  2011, University of Minnesota	Interpersonal communication; social media; social support; self-disclosure; close relationships
John Howard, Associate Professor (F)	COMM 6124: Organizational Communication (3, G, fall) COMM 6131: Social Influence (3, G, fall)	PhD in Communication Studies	Language and social interaction; institutional and



	COMM 6224: Communication and Health Organizations (3, G, fall)	CIP 0901-01 2003, Bowling Green State University	mediated discourse; and organizational communication.
Glenn Hubbard, Assistant Professor (F)	COMM 6210: Media and Health Communication (3,G, spring)	PhD in Communication & Information (Journalism and Electronic Media) CIP 0901-02 2008, University of Tennessee, Knoxville	Broadcast journalism; converged journalism education; audio/video production-value effects; radio localism effects.
Jin-Ae Kang, Assistant Professor (F)		PhD in Communication & Information Science CIP 0901-00 2009, University of Alabama	PR ethics & social responsibility, PR leadership, international PR; health communication, health related crisis communication.
Linda Kean, Director; Professor (F)	COMM 6210: Media and Health Communication (3,G, spring) COMM 7000: Thesis (1-6, G, fall, spring)	PhD in Communication Arts CIP 0901-01 1998, University of Wisconsin, Madison	Health communication; campaign planning; and media effects.
Kristin Kirschbaum, Assistant Professor (F)	COMM 6230: Introduction to Health Communication (3,G, fall) COMM 6220: Interpersonal Health Communication (3, G, spring)	PhD in Communication CIP 0901-01 2008, University of New Mexico	Health communication; intercultural communication; interpersonal communication among medical providers; communication training to improve patient safety; mixed method research
Brain Massey, Associate Professor (F)	COMM 6030: Research Methods (3,G, spring)	PhD in Mass Communication CIP 0901-02 1997, Florida State University	Print, web, and multiplatform journalism; journalists' job satisfaction; organizational change in the news industry.
Aysel Morin (F)	COMM 6110: Media Effects (3,G, schedule varies) COMM 6000: Communication Theory (3,G, fall)	PhD Communication Studies CIP 0901-01 2004, University of Nebraska, Lincoln	Rhetoric; culture; political discourse; nationalism; and identity.
Laura Prividera, Associate Professor	COMM 6031: Communication Pedagogy (3,G, spring)	PhD in Communication	Gender and cultural communication;

(F)		Studies CIP 0901-01  2002, Bowling Green State University	health communication; and communication pedagogy.
Keith Richards, Assistant Professor (F)	COMM 6220: Interpersonal Health Communication (3, G, spring)	PhD in Communication Sciences CIP 0901-00  2011 University of Connecticut	Health communication; information seeking; prevention; and message design.
Sachiyo Shearman, Associate Professor (F)	COMM 6030: Research Methods (3,G, spring) COMM 6140: Special Topics in Communication (3,G, schedule varies) COMM 6141: Independent Study (3,G, fall, spring) COMM 6221: Intercultural Communication in Health Contexts (3,G, fall)	PhD in Communication CIP 0901-01  2004, Michigan State University	Culture and communication; conflict and negotiation; health communication; social influence; and diffusion of innovation.
Eric Shouse, Associate Professor (F)	COMM 6000: Communication Theory (3,G, fall) COMM 7000: Thesis (1-6, G, fall, spring)	PhD in Communication CIP 0901-01  2003, University of South Florida	Rhetorical and critical theory; and the role of humor and stand-up comedy in popular culture.
Deborah Thomson, Associate Professor (F)	COMM 6031: Communication Pedagogy (3,G, spring) COMM 6210: Media and Health Communication (3,G, spring) COMM 6226: Communication Approaches to Health Advocacy (3,G, schedule varies) COMM 6240: Special Topics in Health Communication (3,G, schedule varies) COMM 7000: Thesis (1-6, G, fall, spring)	PhD in Communication Studies CIP 0901-01  2005, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill	Rhetorical and critical theory; performance studies; media studies; health communication.
Mary Tucker-McLaughlin, Assistant Professor (F)		PhD in Mass Communications CIP 0901-02  2010, University of South Carolina	Television news representations of women; broadcast journalism; collective memory; mass communication.
Tulika Varma, Assistant Professor (F)		PhD in Mass Communication & Public Affairs CIP 0901-02  2011, Louisiana State University	Crisis communication strategies; stakeholder relationship management; health communication and social media; international PR

F, P: Full-time or Part-time; D, UN, UT, G: Developmental, Undergraduate Nontransferable, Undergraduate Transferable, Graduate

Evidence that adequate number of faculty members are assigned to support the program;

Impact of the initiative on faculty workload; and

Number and responsibilities of support staff (e.g., program coordinator).

The anticipated impact on faculty workload will be minimal. The School of Communication is currently working on a school-wide plan to increase degree efficiency at the undergraduate level. Our faculty has already voted to decrease our total number of required student credit hours from 126 to 120. Our undergraduate concentrations are currently revamping the undergraduate curriculum to remove obsolete courses, reduce course material overlap, and work toward degree efficiency within the curricular core. For example, two existing three credit hour courses in the Public Relations and Journalism sequences are being collapsed into one new four credit hour course because of redundant content.

During the 2012-2013 school year, in anticipation of taking our current MA program online in 2014, the School of Communication hired assistant professor Dr. Keith Richards, a specialist in health communication who will be assisting with additional online delivery of our face-to-face health communication courses. Dr. Laura Privera serves as our Graduate Program Director. In this role, she analyzes data and completes area reports, works with other areas to ensure alignments, and addresses any program area concerns.

Describe means by which the institution will provide support services for students enrolled at the site(s) or online (e.g., admissions, skills assessment, course registration, academic advising, counseling, etc.).

From admission to graduation ECU provides a system of support services that acknowledge the challenges students away from the campus have in meeting the responsibilities of their families and careers in order to be successful in their academic endeavors. DE students are an integral part of the mission of the university beginning with the university's motto *Servire*, to serve. Rather than develop alternative systems for DE students, ECU has developed web based processes that support all students, both DE and campus. Careful planning and dedicated resources have permitted ECU to move from paper-based processes to a system where all ECU students can interact with the university in the same manner.

The University has made a commitment to provide an online interface for services that all students can access anytime <https://onestop.ecu.edu/onestop>. The ECU OneStop portal allows users (students, faculty, staff,) to personalize a single interface for access to internal campus resources. Students log in to [OneStop](#) using a PirateID and passphrase.

Through the OneStop web portal, students can access advising and registration information, their course schedule, grades, course catalog, course description, a GPA calculator, university events and announcements, and a myriad of other services. Tools available in OneStop include student course registration and tuition payment, faculty access to class rosters and a campus-wide discussion board. Students can also access OneStop from a variety of mobile devices.

The Office of Continuing Studies (OCS) serves as a bridge between the student at a distance and the academic and administrative units of the university. The office respects and understands the unique demands of distance learning and is committed to assuring quality, accessible programs and services. The office conducts its activities in partnership with the academic and administrative units of the university.

OCS is charged with assisting ECU students away from the campus by identifying the nature of their concerns and marshaling the resources of multiple offices to bring that concern to a successful conclusion. The needs and challenges of DE students are more complex and their expectations in regard to service are at a professional level demanded each day in their career settings.

Successful distance education programs require commitment, collaboration and cooperation from all facets of the university. Our mission guides us to assess each individual situation and not to simply direct students elsewhere to address their needs, but to insure a successful resolution. These services provide a safety net for DE students as they make progress in online programs.

OCS provides a dedicated email address and a toll free number staffed by student service specialists who can reassure students and assist in navigating the online resources available to them. They can assist with general program information, procedural issues, as well as link them to resources across the campus. They provide a single point of contact for ECU students who are unable to come to the campus.

ECU has a comprehensive communication plan of email messages to students with information, available services and reminders of important dates, registration reminders, and reassurances that we are available to help.

The Options website [www.options.ecu.edu](http://www.options.ecu.edu) provides a central repository for services and information for DE students. Orientation and online tutorials are available to assist new and current DE students. "Options for Adult Learners", an annual newspaper insert is distributed in newspapers across North Carolina.

The graduate school has developed a system that allows both prospective campus and DE students the opportunity to apply, interact and monitor their progress via a web based system. Registration, drops, withdrawals, graduation applications and transcripts can all be accomplished online in the password protected environment housed in OneStop.

The mission of the Office of Student Financial Aid is to offer a comprehensive financial aid program that attempts to meet the total financial needs of all university students, utilizing aid programs from all sources for which students are believed to be eligible, designing financial aid packages in ways which assist students in achieving a quality education and support their academic objectives. Students are encouraged to apply online and information, forms and access to key personnel is available at <http://www.ecu.edu/financial/>

eBill notifications for tuition statements are sent to students and/or authorized user(s) by email. Paper bills are no longer mailed. Students can set up authorized users to access their account information, recent statements, and make payments. Students can log into ONESTOP at anytime to view current account information, recent statements, and make payments. All registered students are mailed an ECU Higher One Card (Debit MasterCard) for refund preference selection. Student refunds can include Financial Aid or credits for dropping class. The Office of Continuing Studies also maintains a Business office that can assist DE students with financial matters related to the university.

The ECU DE Proctoring Center is an approved site in the UNC Online Proctoring Network. This site serves distance education students who need to make an appointment to take proctored exams, and faculty members who need to set up proctored exams for distance education courses. It serves faculty and students throughout the UNC system. Information about the UNC Online Proctoring Network is available at <http://services.northcarolina.edu>.

6. Library and learning resources

Describe library and information resources to support the program, including staffing and services in place to support the initiative.

Describe cooperative agreements with other institutions and include a copy of such agreements in the appendix.

Relative to electronic resources, describe how students and faculty will access information, training for faculty and students in the use of online resources, and staffing and services available to students and faculty.

The J.Y. Joyner Library and William E. Laupus Health Sciences Library serve students enrolled at East Carolina University. Both libraries provide special services for distance education students.

Off-campus access is available to all students using library resources remotely by authentication through a proxy server. The students authenticate themselves by using their ECU Pirate ID and passphrase. Further information regarding this service is available at <http://media.lib.ecu.edu/reference/howdoi/display.cfm?id=46.0>.

Both libraries provide library orientations and research assistance to distance education students. Library orientations are provided through online tutorials, videos, and research guides (LibGuides) which introduce services to distance students and instruct them in the use of specific library research tools. These resources are available 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Assistance with research is provided through instant messaging, text messaging, e-mail, telephone, or in-person. Distance Education students are able to request one-on-one consultation services provided through instant messaging, phone, or in-person. Students may also have contact with liaison librarians who partner with faculty to provide instruction, synchronously or asynchronously.

Joyner Library currently subscribes to more than 450 databases containing indexes to journal and magazine articles. Many of these resources offer full-text access to individual articles. Laupus Library currently offers an extensive collection of online databases and collections. Many of these resources offer full-text access to individual articles and books. A listing of these resources may be found at <http://www.ecu.edu/laupuslibrary/research/electronicresources.cfm>. If students wish to determine if one of the libraries have full-text access to a particular journal title, they may use the E-Journal/E-book Portal at <http://jw3mh2cm6n.search.serialssolutions.com/>.

Students enrolled in distance education courses may check out books from both Joyner and Laupus Libraries as well as obtain print or online journal articles. Further information about obtaining materials at a distance is available through the Interlibrary Loan/Document Delivery Departmental websites of each library: Joyner Library, <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-lib/accesssrv/ill/index.cfm>; Laupus Library <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-dhs/laupuslibrary/departments/docdel.cfm>.

J.Y. Joyner Library houses and provides access to a physical collection of over 1.9 million volumes, over 48,000 serials (print and online), over 500,000 e-books, more than 24,000 items in its digital collection and one million federal documents (print and online). The library provides access to more than 400 electronic databases made available through several consortia and its own subscriptions. All together, the electronic database collections provide access to over 76,000 full-text journal titles. Resources can be accessed through the Joyner Library web site at <http://www.ecu.edu/lib>. Other collection features include: a non-book media collection with over 32,000 items in various formats, a teaching, resources and curriculum materials collection, a collection dedicated to North Carolina materials, a Special Collections Department that houses over 11,000 linear feet of manuscripts, university archival materials, and a rare book collection. The library has also established an institutional repository which includes electronic theses and dissertations of ECU students and the scholarly output of both ECU students and faculty members.

Laupus Library shares the 300,000 square foot state-of-the-art educational center with the College of Allied Health Sciences and the College of Nursing. The four-story 72,000 square foot library provides study and collaboration space, a computer lab, media production and consultation services, reference services, and circulating and historical collections. Laupus subscribes to major academic literature databases covering every subject area relevant to the Division. Laupus provides and manages access to more than 143,864 full text electronic journal titles and has a current combined print and e-book collection of 479,979 titles. Off-campus access is available to all students using library resources remotely by authentication through a proxy server.

Students enrolled at East Carolina University as distance education students are provided special services to ensure access to both Joyner and Laupus Libraries' physical and electronic collections. A Distance Education Coordinator is employed to facilitate the delivery of library services and plays an active role in shaping services to distant users. Many librarians and staff members within the library work directly with distance students as services are provided. Information about distance education services can be found at [http://media.lib.ecu.edu/DE/DE\\_Home.cfm](http://media.lib.ecu.edu/DE/DE_Home.cfm)

Librarians from Joyner Library conduct orientation and instruction sessions to distance education students using a variety of methods. The Distance Education Coordinator provides open orientation sessions to students via web conferencing software. Orientation sessions are also offered to faculty members to provide information about library services which can be passed along to students in their distance courses. Library instruction sessions are provided via pre-recorded video, online web conferencing software, embedding resources in the course management system, and in-person at the request of the teaching faculty member.

The library also provides online tutorials, videos, and research guides, LibGuides, which introduce services to distance students and instructs them in the use of specific library research tools. These resources are available 24 hours a day 7 days a week and can be located at:

<http://media.lib.ecu.edu/DE/Tutorials.cfm> (tutorials)  
<http://media.lib.ecu.edu/DE/tutorial/deservices.html> (video)  
<http://libguides.ecu.edu/> (LibGuides)

Joyner Library offers reference services to support ECU's distance learning students in the use of library resources for learning and research. Reference services have been expanded to include online options as well as more traditional means of communication. Assistance is provided through instant messaging, text messaging, e-mail, telephone, or in-person. Distance Education students may also request one-on-one consultation services provided through instant messaging, phone, or in-person. The Distance Education Coordinator is available to provide additional assistance when needed. Students may request assistance using the "Ask a Librarian" web page at [http://www.ecu.edu/cs-lib/reference/ask\\_a\\_librarian.cfm](http://www.ecu.edu/cs-lib/reference/ask_a_librarian.cfm). Laupus Library's distance education services include reference assistance via email, chat, text and phone, access to online research databases, access to full-text journals, books and video collections, web-based instructional tutorials, and Document Delivery services where materials are sent online or in the postal mail to students at a distance.

#### 7. Physical resources

Describe physical facilities and equipment to support this initiative. Assess the impact that the proposed change will have on existing programs and services.

##### *For off-campus facilities:*

Name of the agency or organization that is providing the space.

Rental, lease, or other arrangements involved in obtaining use of this space including rates.

Describe any agreements or understandings with the organization providing the space.

An appropriate technology infrastructure is provided by the institution to support distance education. The university recognizes the vital need for a robust and reliable network, and consistently researches and implements infrastructure upgrades and improved processes to ensure network integrity and improve network uptime. Additionally, the Official content management system for the University runs on state of the art hardware, which guarantees a high level of quality with minimal downtime.

Technology at ECU is supported collaboratively through the efforts of Information Technology and Computing Services, Joyner and Laupus Libraries, and Distributed Information Technology units among colleges.

Information Technology and Computing Services (ITCS) supports the planning, coordination and implementation of computing on the ECU campus as well as the computing products and services related to the instruction, research and service goals of East Carolina University.

ECU's information technology road map is developed and updated by the Information Resources Coordinating Council (IRCC), which guides the selection of campus-wide IT projects. IT Governance establishes the decision-making process, defines accountability and identifies responsibility for technology across the university.

ECU has a total of 4 physical application servers (Sun Sparc Enterprise T5240) each has 2 Processors (8 Core Ultra Sparc T2+) running at 1.2 Ghz and capable of 128 simultaneous processing threads and 128 GB of RAM. Each of these application servers is divided into 3 Logical Domains each (separating our production, development/pilot, and restore environments). Course content is stored on our NAS device and we are currently using 1.5TB of the allocated 2.0TB. The Database Servers consist of 2 Sun Sparc Enterprise M5000 servers. Each has 8 Processors (4 Core Sparc64 VII) running at 2.4 Ghz and capable of 64 simultaneous processing threads and 128 GB of RAM. Each M5000 is partitioned into 2 domains (one for Production use and one for Development/Pilot use). The databases are configured using Solaris Clustering to provide failover capability.

In March 2010, we had Blackboard Consulting Services perform a Performance Audit and Tuning Engagement on our Production (Blackboard 8) and Development/Pilot (Blackboard 9) environments. The outcome of the engagement indicated our production system was well tuned, designed, and capable of supporting our students.

Because of the importance of this environment to the University, ITCS has taken a High Availability first, disaster recovery last approach. Each server is built with component redundancy for processors, memory, power supplies, network cards, fiber cards, etc. Multiple fully redundant systems power the database and applications tiers. The redundant servers are split between our primary (Cotanche) and secondary (GE99) data centers and are connected via multi-pathed replicated storage also split between both data centers. Sun Clustering is used to provide automatic failover for the database tier, while load balancing provides seamless redundancy for the applications tier. The design ensures that ECU can maintain BlackBoard services in the face of an entire data center failure. In addition, full system nightly backups are maintained offsite and recovery procedures are routinely tested should they be needed.

Through ECU's nearly Petabyte of storage, adequate storage and backup is available for student work, academic websites, student and faculty blogs. There are several resources available for the sharing of video. The primary resource for sharing student work is iTunes and a winmedia streaming server. Both of these resources enable students and faculty to upload unlimited amounts of video for use in courses.

The primary video infrastructure used to record lectures is through Media Site. Our Mediasite 5.5 setup is based on a high availability load balancing infrastructure, we currently run two application servers and one video content server that facilitate all of the capture from 35+ recorders to 13 departmental sites for both on demand and live streaming presentations. All sites have Active Directory authentication or local user authentication to view information and sensitive material.

The main internet connection for the University is provided by the North Carolina Research and Educational Network (NCREN). The connection to NCREN is a 1 gigabit per second connection to the NRCEN Remote Point of Presence (RPOP) which is connected to the NCREN backbone by two 1 gigabit per second connections taking diverse paths back into the NCREN network.

To ensure success, adequate funding is provided for the technology infrastructure for distance education, through an education and technology student fee, which funds Blackboard, Centra, Second Life, retention tools (e.g., Starfish, Yammer), MediaSite, Moodle, Virtual Computing Lab, Help Desk Support, Software downloads (e.g., SPSS, SAS, Minitab, Mathematica, SAV, Nvivo), and other services that support distance education. Students receive an ECU PirateID that provides an e-mail

account; access to web-based course management systems (Blackboard and Moodle), Web space, and electronic file storage space; and full access to electronic information and databases. Assistance with computer configurations, software interfaces, and technology problems is provided through ECU's Help Desk and the ACE Student Computing Support Center.

8. Financial support

Describe financial resources to support the change, including the budget for the first year of the proposed program. Include projected revenues (including tuition and fees receipts, state appropriations based on projected SCHs, grants, etc.) and expenditures, as well as amount of resources going to institutions or organizations for contractual or support services.

Description	Total	
Existing Faculty Salaries	80,195	80,195 (average faculty salary)/18 (faculty hrs.) x 18 (semester hrs. in first year)
Benefits	18,445	(23% x 80,195)
Supplies & Materials	1,500	250 per course (250 x 6 courses)
Total Budget	100,140	(faculty salaries, benefits, supplies & materials)
Tuition Revenue	37,260	\$207 (DE in-state tuition) x 180 (SCH's from first year)
Enrollment revenue	85,153	(80,195 average faculty salary) / (169.52 matrix FTE) x (180 SCH)

Student credit hours (SCHs) delivered to non-North Carolina residents receiving instruction outside the boundaries of North Carolina are not eligible for State-provided enrollment funding and these SCHs should not be reported on the funding matrix. The institution must set the rate charged for these SCHs at a level sufficient to cover the cost of instruction, which should be at least double the official in-state tuition rate. Indicate the average number of SCHs per semester that will be delivered to non-NC residents receiving instruction outside the boundaries of NC and the tuition that will be charged per-SCH for this instruction:

SCHs per semester delivered to non-NC residents receiving the instruction outside of NC boundaries: none anticipated.

Per-SCH charge, tuition and fees, for this out-of-state instruction to non-NC residents: \$826.00.

If a site-based degree program is to be offered out of state, a more detailed justification is required. Please provide the rationale for offer the program out-of-state and the how resources will be secured to support the program, and indicate whether any State-supported resources will be used in the program. N/A

9. Evaluation and assessment

Describe the means used by the institution to monitor and ensure the quality of the degree program and off-campus site(s).



Summarize procedures for systematic evaluation of instructional results, including the process for monitoring and evaluating programs at the new site, as well as using the results of evaluation to improve institutional programs, services, and operations.

With a look toward continuous improvement, the provost appointed the ECU Online Quality Council. Their charge was to develop university wide training standards and an ongoing peer review process for faculty teaching distance education courses. This university wide group included subcommittees that examined standards, the peer review process, and support services. This work resulted in the revision of the university's faculty manual.

The Office of Institutional Planning, Assessment and Research coordinates the assessment of student learning outcomes in academic degree programs. A standard format for reporting goals, criteria for success, results, and use of results has been implemented and an assessment coordinator for academic affairs has been working with an assessment team, consisting of representatives from all academic units.

It is important to note that assessment of programs delivered through distance education is fully integrated into the university-wide assessment program. Since all distance education programs and courses originate in the academic unit, the academic unit develops the assessment plan for the program regardless of the mode of delivery. The ECU Policy on Distance Education states that faculty and administrators within academic units oversee all distance education programs to ensure quality and content. Academically, there is to be no distinction between courses taught on campus and those taught via distance education. All participants must meet the same course objectives and demonstrate the same learning outcomes. The curriculum and evaluation of DE courses, however delivered, are conducted under the same procedures and personnel as on-campus courses. As stated in the university's policy on distance education, the academic unit establishes the intended learning outcomes, the means of assessment, and the criteria for success, and carries out the assessment activities for both the campus and DE programs. All ECU faculty members teaching DE courses are required to complete DE training modules and to update their skills by completing yearly DE training.

The School of Communication assesses student's performance on theory, methods and a special topic area within the field of communication via two routes: comprehensive exams or a thesis project. Within special topic areas, the faculty also assesses student's knowledge of global and intercultural communication. Faculties assess students' knowledge, application, analysis and synthesis of material within each of the three areas noted above to determine students' satisfactory or unsatisfactory performance.

In 2009, ECU purchased TracDat, an SCT software product that is being used to help manage the institutional planning and assessment process, allowing faculty and administrators to enter program and departmental strategic plans, including assessment plans, assessment methods, and outcomes, and to vertically and horizontally align their goals to other departmental, divisional, and college-wide goals. The templates assure a uniformity of reporting that simplifies collection, review, management, and utilization of data.

TracDat holds all assessment plans and reports which include student learning and administrative outcomes, assessment methods, criterion for success, results and action steps. Concise reports can be generated within the system to assist with planning and program improvement.

In accordance with accreditation requirements, the institution will ensure that the student who registers in a distance education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the program and receives the academic credit.

ECU utilizes a web-based authentication system to determine that the student registered in a distance education course is the student who participates in, completes, and receives credit for the course. The authentication system requires that the student securely log on to ECU's network using a unique user identification (Pirate ID) and with a unique and user-determined [passphrase](#).

Upon admission, new students receive both their PirateID username and ECU ID number. Once received, new users log in to the [PirateID \(PID\) auto-registration system](#) and follow the step-by-step screens to activate their PirateID account, create a unique passphrase and set up their authentication questions. Once activated, users will be able to check ECU e-mail and access ECU's various online systems such as OneStop and Blackboard.

ECU's [Password Expiration Policy](#) states that students are required to have a strong passphrase that is resistant to "hacking", and they must reset their passphrase every 90 days and not reuse the account's previous six passphrases. Students are notified via e-mail or system messaging at least three times in the two weeks prior to expiration. When students use their PirateID and passphrase to access information through OneStop and the university's learning management system, Blackboard, their login credentials are encrypted for additional security.

Distance education students must verify their identity with the ID and password to participate in electronic systems at ECU. The delivery of instruction, group activities, individual student materials from faculty and assessment activities require every student to login into the university learning platform (Blackboard) and other systems using their unique secure passphrase.

Faculty may choose to include proctored exams in their courses. To support this effort ECU participated in the establishment of a [state-wide proctoring network](#). A [Distance Education Proctoring Center](#) is available to students enrolled in DE courses at East Carolina University and all other universities within the University North Carolina system. This site serves distance education students who need to take exams and faculty members who need to setup proctored exams for their Distance Education courses. This service provides verification of student identify in assessment and evaluation.

Through secure logins and pass codes and the widespread use of proctored examinations, East Carolina University verifies the identity of the student who registers in a distance education course or program.

10. Attachments

Attachments may include items such as (1) vitae of key faculty; (2) selected letters of support; (3) copies of library and other cooperative agreements, etc.

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

Dr. Laura C. Prividera  
Director of Graduate Studies, College of Fine Arts and Communication  
Associate Director, School of Communication  
East Carolina University  
102 Joyner East  
Greenville, North Carolina 27858  
Phone: 252-328-5304  
E-mail: [privideral@ecu.edu](mailto:privideral@ecu.edu)

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This request to establish a new distance education degree program (or program site) has been reviewed and approved by the appropriate campus committees and authorities.

**Chief Academic Officer** \_\_\_\_\_