

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

REQUEST FOR NEW PROGRAMS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

PART I - BACHELOR OF ARTS PROGRAM IN GLOBAL STUDIES

Action Requested: Consider approval of the request by the University of Northern Iowa to establish a new Bachelor of Arts Program in Global Studies which will be administered by the Department of History in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Executive Summary: Using a multi-disciplinary approach, the proposed program will offer students a broad foundation to understand the complex global order and links between the local, national, and global spheres. This proposal was reviewed by the Board Office and the Council of Provosts and is recommended for approval. No concerns were raised when it was presented to the Iowa Coordinating Council for Post-High School Education. The proposed program addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priority (1.0) to “ensure high-quality educational opportunities for students.”

Background:

- ◇ **Description of proposed program.** Through a flexible three-tiered approach (thematic areas, geographic areas, and foreign language/culture), the proposed program will expose students to overarching international and global concerns while educating students to be sensitive to national cultures, languages, and regional contexts. The proposed program will examine ways in which people across the globe are affected daily by an unprecedented array of linkages that defy geographic and political boundaries. The proposed program will be an ideal second major for students interested in a career in government, business, international non-governmental organizations, foundations, academia, and journalism and the media, as well as for those students who will undertake graduate work in such fields as law, social sciences and humanities, and area studies.
- ◇ **Proposed program course requirements.** The proposed program will require a minimum of 120 credits hours to graduate. The total includes Liberal Arts Core requirements, major requirements, and electives outside the major. The major requirements include a minimum of 33 credit hours, including six credit hours of core courses, 12 credit hours of a thematic area, and 15 credit hours of a geographic area. Students with no foreign language preparation at the high school or college level may expect to complete up to an additional 20 credit hours in foreign language study.
- ◇ **Relationship to existing programs.** While the proposed program is globally focused, students will choose the thematic and geographic area(s) and the language(s) they will study. Existing programs will support the thematic and geographic areas and languages. This inter-disciplinary approach will give students maximum flexibility in studying international issues and specific areas, cultures, and languages of the world. It is anticipated that the proposed program will enhance foreign language study and increase the number of foreign language majors and minors on campus.

- ◇ Duplication. The proposed program is similar to the International Studies programs offered at the University of Iowa and Iowa State University. All three programs combine thematic, geographic, and foreign language/culture study. A unique element of the proposed program is that students will be encouraged to complete UNI's Certificate in Non-Profit Management and American Humanics¹ to enhance their post-UNI employment prospects. Bachelor of Arts programs in International Studies or International Relations are also available at the following Iowa schools - Central College, Cornell College, Drake University, Graceland University, Loras College, Luther College, Mount Mercy College, St. Ambrose University, Simpson College, and Wartburg College.
- ◇ Student demand. In a survey conducted by UNI's Office of Institutional Research in Spring 2009, undergraduates were queried about their interest in the proposed program and international education in general. More than 62% of the respondents indicated that they had a medium to very high interest in the proposed program. More than 77% indicated that they felt that knowledge of global issues and foreign language study were important to achieving their career goals.
- ◇ Unique features. National education reports² have stressed a critical need to increase international education at the undergraduate level in the United States in response to the rapid pace of globalization. UNI's unique role in undergraduate education supports the need for the proposed program.
- ◇ Need for proposed program. The Coalition for International Education of the American Council on Education described the workforce needs related to globalization. "Global changes have made the global competence of Americans an essential ingredient for ensuring the nation's security, economic competitiveness, foreign policy leadership, and ability to understand and meet global challenges in the 21st century. Global competence involves, among other things, having cross-cultural skills, foreign language proficiency, and ability to function effectively in other cultural environments and value systems."
- ◇ Resources. The University anticipates that no new resources will be needed. The proposed program is expected to draw exclusively on existing resources by using courses taught on a regular basis.
- ◇ Cost. The University has indicated that there will be no additional costs associated with the proposed program.
- ◇ Projected enrollment. The projected enrollment is 10 students in Year 1, increasing to 20 students per year in Years 2-7. Anticipated sources of these students are undergraduates at the University of Northern Iowa.
- ◇ Link to institutional strategic plan. The proposed program addresses UNI's Strategic Plan Goal 3 "to focus the involvement of the University in addressing critical local, state, national and global needs."

¹ This Certificate provides knowledge, skill-building, and professional experience for students interested in working for non-governmental organizations and international non-governmental organizations. Earning this certificate at UNI also enables students to earn a national Certificate in Nonprofit Management and Leadership from American Humanics, Inc.

² "A Call to Leadership: The Presidential Role in Internationalizing the University." (www.aplu.org/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=570). "College Learning for the New Global Century: A Report from the national Leadership Council for Liberal Education and America's Promise (2007). (www.aacu.org/leap/documents/GlobalCentury_final.pdf).

PART II - BACHELOR OF ARTS PROGRAM IN GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SCIENCE

Action Requested: Consider approval of the request by the University of Northern Iowa to establish a new Bachelor of Science Program in Geographic Information Science which will be administered by the Department of Geography in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Executive Summary: The proposed program is designed to create high levels of applied knowledge and competency in the technologies, methods, applications, and theory of geographic information science. This proposal was reviewed by the Board Office and the Council of Provosts and is recommended for approval. No concerns were raised when it was presented to the Iowa Coordinating Council for Post-High School Education. The proposed program addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priority (1.0) to “ensure high-quality educational opportunities for students.”

Background:

- ◇ **Description of proposed program.** The proposed program, also known as Geospatial Sciences and Technology, will develop the ability to create and work with geographic data, using state-of-the-art hardware and software, to carry out spatial analyses in specific applied fields, including Environmental Science and Policy, Human Geographic Processes, Economic Geography and Business, and Planning and Policy. Geographic Information Science (GISc) encompasses the three interconnected technologies of Global Positioning Systems (GPS), Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and Remote Sensing. These cutting-edge technologies permit the capture, encoding, and analysis of geographically-based data which lead to advanced synthesis and improved dissemination of knowledge about natural and human environments.
- ◇ **Relationship to existing programs.** GISc technologies, especially GIS, are becoming as important to many university programs as they have become to business and industry. GISc is a tool for interdisciplinary research and analysis. The proposed program has application focus areas in social science, economic geography and business, planning and policy, and environmental science and policy. These fields will help establish stronger links with other disciplines and allow the proposed program to serve as a nexus for interdisciplinary work. Many programs already benefit from current GISc offerings and others will benefit from a strong GISc program, including criminology (crime pattern mapping), ecology (ecological niche modeling), marketing (GIS market analysis), earth science (remote sensing mineral exploration), and public policy (planning). Past projects have included child maltreatment rates across Iowa (Social Work) and evaluation of the location of crosswalks and campus emergency telephones (Criminology).
- ◇ **Student demand.** Development of the proposed program was a recommendation in the department’s last two academic program reviews. It was also included as a goal in the department strategic plan. Three years ago, under the auspices of the Carver Foundation, the department offered a summer institute to GIS faculty from several UNI departments. During the past year, the department became a training site for ESRI GIS software.³

³ ESRI is the world leader in geographic information systems spatial modeling tools and mapping software.

- ◇ Duplication. The proposed program will be the only baccalaureate program in GISc in the state. The University of Iowa offers a GISc track in the geography department but not a degree program. The proposed program will differ substantially from UNI's current emphasis and SUI's track in both scope and rigor. The proposed program will provide an extensive core of 24 credit hours in GISc coursework with supporting concentrations of coursework designed to provide a secondary expertise in a primary field of application. Kirkwood Community College offers an associate of applied science degree in GIS; other Iowa community colleges have developed courses or short programs in GISc. The proposed program has the potential to build connections, including articulation agreements, with those community colleges.

- ◇ Unique features. UNI's Geography has already established itself as a leader in applied GISc in the state through its education and research programs in applied GISc. Through the Geoinformatics Teaching, Research, Education, and Extension (GeoTREE) Center, UNI engages in cutting-edge research which facilitates knowledge and technology transfer to Iowa agencies. During the past few years, UNI has conducted 10 training workshops and conferences and trained more than 300 public employees in GISc techniques applicable to their agency. The GIS laboratory has been established as the ESRI Midwest regional training site. This is a public-private arrangement with ESRI, the manufacturer of the industry standard GIS software.

- ◇ Need for proposed program. Current demand for the Bachelor of Arts program in Geography with emphasis in GISc illustrates students' interest in the proposed program. Total revenues of geospatial technology sales, service, and spending grew by 500% between 2000 and 2006. Employment sectors that now depend at least partially on GISc continue to expand, including fields as diverse as civil engineering, public health, environmental science, urban and regional planning, and the geosciences. The U.S. Department of Labor lists Geospatial Technology as one of the top three "emerging industries" for the 21st century and invested \$6.4 million to address workforce needs.⁴

- ◇ Resources. Most of the resources needed to develop and implement the proposed program are already in place. During the past three years, the Department of Geography has doubled the number of faculty lines devoted to GISc. The department has a new, state-of-the-art teaching lab and a research and outreach center. The University also carries any primary software licenses that will be needed for the proposed program.
 - ⇒ Stipends for undergraduate teaching and research assistants will be needed. Undergraduate assistants will help faculty teach the hands-on, lab portions of the GIS classes and increase the undergraduate research component of the proposed program.
 - ⇒ Funds will also be requested during the first five years for marketing and recruitment.
 - ⇒ Grant activity in the department will continue to be an important means of developing expertise and acquiring hardware and data which can be used in the proposed program as well as a funding source to support undergraduate employment. Currently, the department has obtained more than \$1.5 million in grants; with recent hires, the department expects to maintain or exceed that level of productivity.

⁴ DOL, 2007, www.careervoyages.gov/spatialtechnology-main.cfm.

- ◇ Cost. The projected annual cost of the proposed program for Years 1-7 will be approximately \$21,000. New resources needed for the proposed program will be acquired from reallocations within the department. Funds for undergraduate stipends will be acquired through reallocations from either the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences or elsewhere in Academic Affairs.

- ◇ Projected enrollment. The projected enrollment is 15 students in Year 1, increasing to 40 students per year by Year 7. There is an expectation that non-majors will also enroll in courses provided by the proposed program. Initially, students will transfer into the proposed program from the existing program emphasis. New majors who have declared a major in the emphasis will be directed to the new program. A future source of students will be community college transfer students.

- ◇ Link to institutional strategic plan. The proposed program addresses UNI's Strategic Plan Goal 3 "to focus the involvement of the University in addressing critical local, state, national and global needs."