Florida Gulf Coast University Board of Trustees
April 15, 2014

SUBJECT: Reactivation of the B.A. Liberal Studies with CIP Code Change from 24.0101 to 30.0000

PROPOSED BOARD ACTION

Approve the reactivation of the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) Liberal Studies degree program with a change in Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code from 24.0101 to 30.0000.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

FGCU is requesting reactivation of the B.A. Liberal Studies degree program as described in the Executive Summary. In addition, FGCU is requesting that the CIP for this program be changed from 24.0101 to 30.0000, as described in the CIP Change Request Form.

Supporting Documentation Included: (1) Executive Summary for B.A. Liberal Studies; and (2) CIP Change Request Form

Prepared by: Associate Vice President for Academic and Curriculum Support Cathy Duff

Legal Review by: General Counsel Vee Leonard (April 1, 2014)

Submitted by: Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Ron Toll
Florida Gulf Coast University
March 24, 2014

Executive Summary
B.A. Liberal Studies Proposal

Degree: Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)
Major: Liberal Studies
Concentrations: None
College: Arts & Sciences
Department: n/a
Effective Date: Fall 2014
Proposed Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP Code): 30.0000

Introduction

When the University opened in 1997, the College of Arts and Sciences offered a single degree program in Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code 24.0101 (Liberal Arts and Sciences/Liberal Studies). This program was called the B.A. Liberal Studies and had multiple concentrations in traditional disciplinary areas. In 2006, the FGCU Board of Trustees approved conversion of the concentrations into free-standing majors. The University continued to offer the B.A. Liberal Studies as an individualized program of study until fall 2008 when the program was inactivated. No new students have been admitted to this program since summer 2008.

This proposal involves reactivation of the B.A. Liberal Studies degree program with a change of CIP from 24.0101 to 30.0000, as described in the CIP Change Request Form. The reason for the CIP change is to place the program in a category that is consistent with state classification practices for similar programs. The form is a standard format required for this purpose by the Office of Academic and Student Affairs of the Board of Governors.

The reactivated B.A. Liberal Studies program will be offered as a collaborative effort between the College of Arts and Sciences and the Office of Continuing Education and Off-Campus Programs. It will be offered only as a degree-completion program for non-traditional-age students who have earned approximately two years of college credit but no baccalaureate degree. The program will be attractive to working adults who want to advance in their professions, lifelong learners seeking intellectual stimulation and personal enrichment, and others who desire a multi-disciplinary undergraduate education as preparation for entry into graduate programs.

The B.A. Liberal Studies program will be offered in a combination of online, evening, and weekend courses. Classes may be held at the main FGCU campus in Lee County and at the following off-campus locations of the Office of Continuing Education and Off-Campus Programs (a) Herald Court Center in Charlotte County, (b) Naples Center on 5th Avenue in Collier County, and (c) Atrium Executive Suites on College Parkway in Lee County. Most of the face-to-face courses will be delivered in 8-week terms (same number of contact hours as the traditional FGCU 16-week semester, just condensed) to accommodate the needs of the non-traditional population. To allow for maximum flexibility, registration for courses will be on a rolling, non-cohort basis.
The B.A. Liberal Studies will be comprised of 120 semester credit hours. The curriculum includes (a) 36 hours of general education coursework, (b) 9 hours of required courses in the major, (c) 21 hours of electives in the major, (c) 3 hours of IDS 3920 University Colloquium, and (d) additional electives to total 120 credit hours. No specific common prerequisite coursework is required for programs in CIP 30.0000. There are no concentrations in the program.

The curriculum was approved by the College of Arts and Sciences Undergraduate Curriculum Committee on October 4, 2013, and the university-wide Undergraduate Curriculum Team on February 11, 2014. The program is consistent with the Florida Board of Governors Regulation 8.011 Authorization of New Academic Degree Programs and Other Curricular Offerings.

A substantive change prospectus will be submitted to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges informing the Commission of FGCU’s plans to add a degree completion program.

**Need and Demand**

Organizations and businesses need an educated workforce to adapt to rapid change. A market search study of 200 mid-sized and large employers from across North America, revealed that ongoing education and skill upgrades were critically important in the workplace. Approximately 76 percent of mid-level positions required at least a bachelor’s degree or professional licensure. In addition, developing existing personnel through on-going education was an effective means of managing labor costs. (Source: “Lifelong Education and Labor Market Needs” [http://www.evolllution.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/evo-research-final.pdf](http://www.evolllution.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/evo-research-final.pdf))

According to the Fact Book on Higher Education, in 2006 the United States ranked second in the world in the percentage of 25 to 34-year-olds with a bachelor’s degree or higher and first among 45 to 54-year-olds. By 2010 the U.S. ranking had fallen to ninth for 25 to 34-year-olds and second for 45 to 54-year-olds. Further, Florida trailed national educational attainment. As of 2011, 74 percent of Florida adults 25 years of age and over did not possess a bachelor’s degree, versus 72 percent nationally. Only 18 states ranked lower than Florida.

According to the 2010 U.S. Census Bureau, approximately 179,910 individuals within the FGCU service area had completed some college, but had not earned a degree. Further, approximately 61,070 individuals within the FGCU service area had earned an associate’s degree as the highest level of college attainment.

During the 2012-2013 academic year, approximately 2,641 individuals within the FGCU service area earned an associate’s degree. During fall 2012, approximately 13,053 students in the FGCU service area were enrolled in associate degree programs (estimates from Edison State College and Hodges University only.) These former and current students are potential applicants to the B.A. Liberal Studies program.

The proposed B.A. Liberal Studies is consistent with and complementary to the State University System (SUS) degree-completion initiative *Complete Florida*. It utilizes many of the same tactical approaches, such as online learning, accelerated course scheduling, and concierge approach to advising.

To gauge interest in the proposed program, the Office of Continuing Education and Off-Campus Programs distributed a survey during September 2013 to prospective students via employers
and community organizations. Of 282 respondents, nearly 90 percent expressed interest in pursuing degree completion. The largest agreement with any question in the survey pertained to the importance of being able to complete a degree while maintaining the respondent’s current work schedule. Weekend formats, online courses, and courses offered at Continuing Education facilities in Collier, Lee, and Charlotte Counties also received positive responses.

Projected Enrollment

A conservative headcount of 15 students is anticipated in Year 1 of the program. Using an approximate 15 percent year-to-year growth rate, a headcount of 26 students is projected for Year 5.

Resources and Budget

The proposed B.A. Liberal Studies program will not supplant existing FGCU offerings funded through Education & General (E&G) funds nor will any E&G funds be shifted to support the new program. The program will be self-funded via tuition revenues in the auxiliary budget entity for the FGCU Office of Continuing Education and Off-Campus Programs. Projected costs for Year 1 of the program are approximately $31,000 for faculty salaries, marketing, and miscellaneous overhead with projected revenue at approximately $31,500. Projected costs for Year 5 are approximately $34,400 with projected revenue at approximately $55,000. Using these projections, the net revenue by Year 5 will be $20,600.

No additional faculty lines are needed. Faculty who teach courses in the program will be compensated via the appropriate auxiliary account separately from the normal workload. Faculty participation will be voluntary (with the approval of the respective department chair), analogous to a faculty member holding any outside employment. No other programs will be impacted by a reallocation of resources.

No new library resources, classrooms, laboratories, specialized equipment, or administrative space are needed to implement and support this program through Year 5.

Consistency with University Mission and Strategic Plan

The proposed B.A. Liberal Studies program is directly related to the SUS 2012-2025 Strategic Plan goal to “Increase Degree Productivity and Program Efficiency” by increasing “access and degree completion for students, including students from traditionally underrepresented groups, returning adult students, and distance learning students.”

The proposed program is consistent with the FGCU Mission Statement that emphasizes fulfilling the academic, cultural, social, and career expectations of its constituents and cultivating habits of lifelong learning.

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1. Provide a short background and rationale for the CIP change request.

FGCU is authorized to offer a baccalaureate degree program in CIP 24.0101. When the university opened in 1997, the College of Arts and Sciences offered a single degree program, the B.A. Liberal Studies with multiple concentrations in traditional disciplinary areas. In 2006, the FGCU Board of Trustees approved conversation of the concentrations into free-standing degree programs. The university continued to offer the B.A. Liberal Studies as an individualized program of study until fall 2008 when the program was inactivated. No new students have been admitted into this program since fall 2008.

FGCU is developing a degree completion program in multi-/interdisciplinary studies. The aim of this program is to provide an interdisciplinary education with a humanities focus to adult learners who are returning to the university to complete a degree. The change to CIP 30.0000 will make this program consistent with state classification practices for similar programs. Currently, UCF and UNF are authorized to offer a baccalaureate program under CIP 30.0000.

2. Provide an explanation of any impacts on program faculty and current and future students.

The B.A. Liberal Studies program is targeted to students who have accumulated a significant amount of college credit but find it difficult to come to the campus during
weekdays to finish their bachelor degree. Future students for this program will be incremental to FGCU. A major goal for this program is to provide educational access for students who would not otherwise attend FGCU. Therefore, no impact on current students is anticipated.

There should be minimal impact on faculty. Faculty who teach courses specific to this program will be teaching outside of regular teaching load and will be compensated via the appropriate auxiliary account similar to an overload. Because the courses for the program are spread among several disciplines, no one program will bear an undue burden to supply courses. Consequently, the program will not significantly impact the ability of faculty to deliver courses in their primary departments. Faculty participation will be voluntary, with the approval of the respective department chair.

3. Provide evidence that consideration has been given to the impact on other existing programs at the university, and the possibility that the CIP change will duplicate programs at another state university.

Other programs at FGCU will not be impacted significantly by the B.A. Liberal Studies. It will be the only degree offered exclusively via a non-weekday/off-campus format, and the only degree limited largely to an interdisciplinary humanities curriculum. The program serves a different student population than those who attend traditional classes at the main campus. Therefore, it should not impact enrollments in our other degree programs.

Similarly, the specific audience and purpose of this program should make its impact on other state universities negligible. Although other state institutions do offer programs targeted to working adults, no program similar to this one is offered in the Southwest Florida region. The nature of this program is such that it should draw students almost exclusively from the local region. With a base of students tied to the local area by existing work or family commitments, a program of this type should not compete with similarly targeted programs in other regions.

4. If applicable, explain how the CIP change will impact the degree program’s listing as an Area of Strategic Emphasis.

Not applicable.

5. For baccalaureate programs, identify any related changes to approved common prerequisites and degree program length.
The proposed program will follow the common perquisites listed for CIP 30.0000, Track 1, in the Common Prerequisite Manual, which is listed as “none.” Proposed program length is 120 hours.