

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, EAST BAY

DESIGNATION CODE: 2007-08 **CAPR 5**

DATE SUBMITTED: November 17, 2007

TO: The Academic Senate

FROM: The Committee on Academic Planning and Review (CAPR)

SUBJECT: Approval of the Establishment of the Construction Management Program

PURPOSE: For Action by the Academic Senate

ACTION

REQUESTED: That the Academic Senate approve the Establishment of the M. S. in Construction Management

**BACKGROUND
INFORMATION:**

The M. S. in Construction Management is designed to meet a regional need that is currently lacking. In fact, the nearest master's level program in construction management is at the University of Southern California and no other CSU has a Masters-level program, although there are a number of programs at the Bachelor's level.

The target market is working professionals in leadership/management positions or those in non-management positions seeking to advance their careers by learning to manage large construction projects. It is expected that there will be an increase in large construction work, based on California's transportation infrastructure improvement projects. There is also awareness that many projects are concentrated in the Bay Area.

The unique features of this program are its broad-based curriculum and its hybrid online/in-person class design. Student learning outcomes are focused on areas of core knowledge, plus skills in communication, teamwork, and practical problem-solving.

The enrollment plans for the program, while optimistic, are also based on a reasonable growth rate, with 20 majors in the first year and an increase to 40 majors in three years.

A number of issues were discussed at the November 15, 2007 CAPR meeting. Of interest is the fact that the Advisory Board, formed from industry members, has offered advertising and financial support (amount unknown). The board will also be able to advise the program about possible lecturers, when needed.

There was discussion about the framework for this program. There has been communication with Laney College, which offers a two-year construction degree, about the potential for a 2+2 program leading to a Bachelor's and the current university commitment to provide the program

with a new tenure-track position will enable the program to hire someone both to teach in the program and also to advise on this effort.

A question was raised about the 2007 survey conducted as part of preparing for this program. The survey elicited 19 responses from the construction industry in this regional area. Respondents indicated that they thought the program was needed, but the committee was concerned as to whether those respondents would be willing to take the program themselves or simply thought it was a good idea for others. In response, the Dean of the College of Science suggested that these surveys might not always have been completed by the actual construction employees, but by those in human resources or other departments in the companies.

Questions about the program content focused on environmental and labor issues. In the case of environmental coverage, the program offers both a course in green buildings and a "current issues" course, where the environment is likely to be one topic. In terms of labor issues, it was pointed out that the Interim Dean of the College of Business has been involved in discussions about this program and is supportive. This issue was apparently not a concern to the program's advisory board, but since this must be a key issue in any study of the construction industry, CAPR raises the issue again here for the program's further consideration. A committee member raised the issue of a discrepancy between the "assessment process" flow chart on p. 7 of the proposal and the "mapping of program inputs to program outcomes" table on p. 8 of the proposal. Finally, a question was raised regarding the required 48 units for the program. This, however, is consistent with other engineering programs at the master's level. Regardless, the courses listed in the "roadmap" on p. 13 add up to 52 units, a discrepancy that also needs to be addressed.

There were several issues surrounding admissions. Some committee members are concerned about the seemingly minimal requirements for admission - Baccalaureate degree (GPA 2.5), relevant work experience, and college algebra. In theory, a BA in history with work experience in the construction industry could enter this degree, complete it, and be eligible for employment at the management level. There was also an expectation for a stronger math requirement than college algebra, but it was explained that not all applicants will come from engineering programs, presumably with calculus in their backgrounds. Committee members inquired about the letters of recommendation and suggested that some stipulation should be made as to the purpose of these letters. The goal is to ask students to provide letters from their current employers, since students are expected to enter the program with existing experience in the field.

Still on admissions, on p.6 of the proposal, Student Standing, item 2 states "Students achieve 'classified Graduate' status when they have satisfied the University Writing Skills requirement." One concern is that this sounds as if the only difference between "conditionally classified graduate" and "classified graduate" is the Writing Skills requirement. But in item 1, the implication is that other differences exist since the plural "prerequisites" is used. Also, the committee assumes that a student should already have satisfied the Writing Skills requirement before completing a Bachelor's degree, unless this writing requirement is at a different level. Further, if students have not met the writing skills requirement, it seems inappropriate to admit them.

The proposal does not include any specific data about budget, other than to suggest that the Provost has committed to providing an additional tenure-track faculty position and that lecturer coverage will be needed for two courses per quarter, beginning in fall 2009. The program has engaged in due diligence with other campus units regarding resources for the library, space, IT, etc., but there was some concern about the library statement that start-up costs would be “nominal.” This word was not defined and does not apply to all elements of the needed library materials. Further, ongoing costs will be required to continue to make these new materials available on an annual basis. No budget figures were provided regarding revenue projections. This issue was discussed at the CAPR meeting on Nov 15th and approved by an email vote.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Academic Senate approve the M. S. in Construction Management with the following modifications:

- That the proposal be adjusted as follows:
 - Reconcile the requirement for 48 units with the “roadmap” that now lists 52 units
 - Reconcile the inconsistency between the “assessment process” flow chart on p. 7 and the “mapping of program inputs to program outcomes” table on p. 8
 - Specify the purpose of the letters of recommendation for admission, namely to verify employment and seek information about work and behavior on the job
 - Clarify the budget further, defining more clearly vague words such as “nominal” and providing some figures to indicate actual costs and projected income as far as they are known
 - Consider changing the two references to classes being held “in the evening” to “at times convenient to students”
- That a standard CAPR MOU be conducted with a particular view to a consideration of resources needed and actual costs.

DATE OF THE PROGRAM’S FIRST FIVE-YEAR REVIEW:

As the program is scheduled to begin in 2008-2009, the first five year review of the program will be scheduled for 2013-2014.

Cc Saeid Motavalli
Cc Michael Leung