

## **Edison College**

### **Analysis: Proposal for Baccalaureate Degree Bachelor of Science Degree in Public Safety Management**

Edison College's proposal for authority to offer a Bachelor of Applied Science degree is a resubmission, of a program proposal originally submitted on November 27, 2001. The proposed program has changed in name from Public Services Management to Public Safety Management to reflect current local and national security needs which have arisen since 2001, particularly the need for well-educated administrators in fire departments, emergency medical services agencies, police and sheriff's departments and other governmental bureaus in Southwest Florida.

#### **History:**

In July 2002, Edison Community College and Florida Gulf Coast University, with approval of the State Board of Education, had signed a Letter of Agreement for Bachelor of Applied Science degree programs in Computer Technology and Public Services Management. In July 2004, the presidents of both colleges in a joint letter to the Commissioner, requested a modification to their Letter of Agreement, which would transfer degree-granting authority for both BAS degrees to Edison. Upon receipt of that request, the Commissioner, acting upon advice of legal counsel, informed Edison College that they would need to submit a new proposal, requesting authorization to singularly offer baccalaureate level degrees.

In October 2004, CEPRI agreed to review a new Edison College proposal outside of the regular submission timeline in order to help expedite program issues impacting students and potential students of the Edison/FGCU program. In November 2004, Edison College submitted a new baccalaureate proposal to CEPRI addressing the matrix of criteria for a Bachelor of Applied Science degree in Public Safety Management. Edison has not at this time requested approval for a BAS in Computer Technology.

#### **Proposal Analysis:**

Chapter 1007.33 FS provides for community colleges to offer baccalaureate programs that address local workforce needs when demand for the specified program is "identified by the workforce development board, local businesses and industry, local chambers of commerce and potential students." As noted in an earlier analysis prepared jointly by the Division of Colleges and Universities and the Division of Community Colleges, "Survey data is provided to substantiate projected student demand for the proposed program, and evidence is provided that strong support for the program exists among local public safety agencies. (Public Services Forums, October 2004 and December 2004). Evidence is also provided that indicates support for the program from the local chamber of commerce and local workforce board."

In developing curriculum and delivery methods, Edison College has relied heavily on input from area employers and potential students. A mix of traditional courses and accelerated, applied courses with flexible scheduling to fit public safety employees' work and shift schedules were strongly considered in planning the delivery of coursework.

Additionally similar programs from across the United States were extensively reviewed, further surveys of curriculum components were conducted for relevance, and regional accreditation issues have been addressed. Articulation from certificate programs to Associate degrees to the baccalaureate in Public Safety Management is graphically displayed in the proposal. It is noted that all required courses and prerequisites will not be final until course development is complete and the program is recommended by the college's Curriculum Committee, approved by the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and submitted to the District Board of Trustees for final approval. Area public safety leaders will serve on the curriculum advisory board.

In the proposal, Edison College has demonstrated that they have contacted and consulted with public and private universities in the region concerning the implementation of their proposed program, identified costs, and submitted letters from university officials.

**Meeting the Criteria in Law:**

Edison College has methodically addressed the Matrix of Criteria and effectively answered in detail, questions posed by CEPRI concerning Need, Potential Impact, Use of Resources, Implementation and Accountability.

**Comment on CEPRI Review:**

CEPRI in their review dated February 2005, has recommended that "Edison College's request for degree-granting authority for the delivery of a Bachelor of Applied Science degree program in Public Safety Management should be approved by the State Board of Education."

The CEPRI analysis and recommendation is largely based upon agreement with Edison College's position that there is a substantial and growing unmet need in Southwest Florida for baccalaureate programs which provide the type of upper division educational opportunities required for advancement by those in public safety occupations. Although Barry University and Franklin University offer similar Public Administration and Public Safety degree programs, CEPRI's assessment was that these programs are geared more toward those interested in a general management focus rather than being specific to those interested in government safety and security issues.

**Budget Request:**

Funds carried forward from the baccalaureate grant and student fees will be used to support the program for 2005-06. No new funding will be requested until 2006-07. Student fees for upper division credit for 2005-06 are set at \$57.94 per credit hour, which is 85% of the university per credit hour matriculation fee of \$68.16. An annual increase of 2% of student fees is budgeted.

Prepared by Dr. Judith Bilsky  
Budget Commentary: Ed Cisek  
Division of Community Colleges & Workforce Education  
March 28, 2005

Attachment: Budget Plan