UTC PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PROJECT NUMBER:
99118

PROJECT TITLE:
The Development of a Multi-disciplinary Transportation and Logistics Education Program

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS:
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PROJECT OBJECTIVE:
The initial objective of this project will be to benchmark and evaluate recognized, existing transportation/logistics programs across U.S. Universities. This process will enable the researchers to compare the University of Alabama’s current resources and expertise to the "Best of the Best", in order to establish a focus for this new program. Once a focus has been established, the researchers will develop a draft curriculum that can be used as the basis for a truly "multi-disciplinary" transportation/logistics program that will reach out to other colleges (e.g., Engineering and Arts & Sciences).

PROJECT ABSTRACT:
The motivating purpose behind this project is to develop an outstanding multidisciplinary transportation/logistics program at The University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, that will produce undergraduate and graduate degreed students to meet the growing needs of the nation and the state of Alabama. The principal investigators plan to work jointly on all tasks, with the assistance of one part-time graduate student assistant. The principal
investigators anticipate sharing their findings through published articles and/or conference presentations.

PROJECT TASK DESCRIPTIONS:
1) Investigate similar programs at other institutions. Summarize and organize results.
1b) Identify strengths and weaknesses of these programs.
2) Identify trends in the transportation industry that should be considered in the design of a current and leading edge curriculum.
3) Assess UA's current curriculum to identify existing courses that can be used and topical material that are missing from these courses.
4) Interact with other colleges to identify current and/or future course offerings. Identify interdisciplinary obstacles and develop plans to overcome these obstacles.
5) Calculate "Gaps" by matching proposed new courses with existing faculty areas of expertise and highlight potential needs.
6) Compile recommendations by drafting a proposed program.

MILESTONES AND DATES:
Project Start Date: October 1, 1999
Task 1a completion: October-November, 1999
Task 1b completion: November-December, 1999
Task 2 completion: December, 1999 - January, 2000
Task 3 completion: February, 2000 - May, 2000
Task 4 completion: June - August, 2000
Task 5 completion: September, 2000
Task 6 completion: September, 2000
Project Completion: August 30, 2000

TOTAL BUDGET:
One-year project: UTCA $40,695; total budget $81,390.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT:
This project will engage a part-time (10 hours per week) graduate student for one year. It is anticipated that this student will become fully versed in transportation/logistics concepts and theories.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER RESEARCH PROJECTS:
This project can be viewed as a stand-alone project as it does not tie into any other UTCA projects.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ACTIVITIES:
Based on the proposed methodology and expected findings/conclusions of this project, the authors expect to publish several articles and/or present their findings at annual conferences. Targeted publications include: the Transportation Journal, the Logistics Educators' Annual Conference of the council of Logistics Management, and, the journal of Business Logistics.
POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT:
The "Key Success Factor" will be the acceptance and commitment of all of the affected colleges. The researchers will spend considerable effort in "marketing" this program to the affected "Key Decision Makers", including testimonials from faculty and administrators at other Universities' successful programs, as well as a detailed needs assessment and an analysis of market opportunities for prospective students.

TRB KEYWORDS:
Education, curricula, logistics education, transportation education, supply chain management education, transportation system management, business logistics.