

Proposal for Flagship Program Status

Transportation and Logistics Program

Coggin College of Business

Submitted by

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To

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&

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Executive Summary

The Transportation & Logistics (T&L) program possesses all the characteristics emblematic of a flagship program. The program is already very strong: in September 2005, the program was ranked 13th nationally by academics, ahead of Stanford, Harvard, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania. It has no major competitors in Florida. It is a natural strategic fit to Jacksonville, as transportation has been identified as one of the city's four *supersectors*, and the city's logistics environment is ranked tenth nationally. The program boasts excellent faculty with strong community ties, outstanding students with a premier student organization, and transformational learning opportunities via internship opportunities and study abroad programs. Moreover, it has already shown its ability to attract major outside funding through two eminent scholar positions.

The T&L curriculum is increasingly challenging those of the nation's (and the world's) five premier programs. However, there is one key element that employers have increasingly requested, but which to date has not been adequately addressed: the comprehensive integration of logistics information technology (LIT). In response, we propose the building of a ***Logistics Information Technology Solutions Laboratory (LITSLAB)*** to fulfill this critical objective.

Flagship resources are vital to creating LITSLAB, and will allow the T&L program to continue its growth, development, and its tradition of responsiveness. LITSLAB would directly benefit students through improved learning, professional development, and recruitment by employers; provide avenues to leverage resource support from software and hardware vendors and sponsors for LITSLAB itself; enhance faculty and professional development; and enhance current classroom space. Moreover, establishing LITSLAB will avail UNF of the timely and unique opportunity to parlay its recent T&L national ranking into further visibility and prominence in the field, as well as establish a novel state resource worthy of flagship status.

Brief Overview of Current Program and Rationale for Flagship Status

The University of North Florida Transportation and Logistics Program in the Coggin College of Business is well on its way to national prominence, with sights set on a top 10 ranking, keeping company with programs twice its size and age. With internationally-recognized faculty, a top-notch curriculum, dedicated students, successful alumni and strong corporate supporters, the program is closer to its goal than ever.

Transportation and Logistics (T&L) interacts with virtually every part of a business. It accounts for over 10% of the U.S. gross domestic product and 7% of the work force. Firms have increasingly sought logistics majors due to the impact logistics has on competitiveness and unique skills required for managing logistics, both within the firm and across multiple firms in the supply chain. Both the private and public sectors of the national and international economy offer exciting and rewarding careers in carrier operations and management, scheduling, production and inventory control, distribution analysis, and administration, planning and economic analysis for ports, airports, urban transit and economic development programs.

Moreover, the impact and prominence of transportation and logistics in our region cannot be over-emphasized. Transportation has been identified by the Jacksonville Chamber of Commerce and the Jacksonville Economic Development Commission as one of the city's four *supersectors*, and the city ranks 10th out of 362 U.S. cities for logistics-friendly environments. All five modes of transportation — air, water, motor carrier, rail, and pipeline — interface here. Jacksonville is home to a full-service international seaport, with four seaport facilities, including America's newest cruise port. These outstanding port facilities comprise one of the largest economic engines in Northeast Florida, and represent Florida's only low-cost option for expansion. In addition, Jacksonville boasts extensive access to railroads, airports, warehousing,

and three interstate highways (I-10, I-75, and I-95) that serve the eastern U.S. Also, leading T&L companies such as CSX Transportation, TNT Logistics North America, Crowley Maritime, APL Logistics, and Landstar System, Inc. have major corporate facilities on the First Coast.

In sum, Jacksonville is clearly an international transportation and logistics hub – and thus the UNF Transportation & Logistics program is a natural strategic fit between our university and our community.

The program has already taken many steps towards gaining the national reputation currently shared by the nation's current "Big Five" schools: Ohio State University, Penn State University, Michigan State University, University of Tennessee, and Arizona State University. Despite being clearly an underdog versus schools of more prominent stature, the UNF T&L program is currently ranked 13th nationally by its academic peers (*Supply Chain Management Review*, "The State of Supply Chain Education," September 2005, 9:6, pp. 55-60), ahead of institutions such as Wisconsin, Stanford, Harvard, Texas A&M, Syracuse, Auburn, Indiana, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania – all of which were noted in the same article.

As will be detailed further in the following sections, reasons for this recognition are numerous. The curriculum content – including its foundation of 60 hours of liberal arts education – and the quality of education the program offers is increasingly challenging that of the Big Five. The T&L faculty possess superb academic credentials, and are extremely well-connected both within the academic community and within the Jacksonville T&L community. Response from students has been excellent, as the number of majors in the program has tripled in size in the last four years. Involvement in the student organization has been among the highest in the university. And program graduates have been very well received by employers in the region. Moreover, the reputation of the program has already resulted in the funding of two eminent

scholar chairs: the Prime F. Osborn III Eminent Scholar Chair in Transportation, and the Paper and Plastics Education Research (PAPER) Eminent Scholar Chair in Supply Chain Management.

It is vital that a flagship program be in concert with the university and college strategic plans, and be a leader in advancing the university's ideals embodied in its new commitment toward transformational learning experiences. The development of an outstanding program in Transportation and Logistics has been the focus of a Coggin College strategic goal for several years, and thus the current request is consonant with the College strategic plan. Furthermore, the university's ideals are captured through the strong encouragement that T&L majors receive to complete a transformational learning experience through a semester internship with a company engaged in logistics. In addition, the T&L faculty have already developed and delivered transformational learning experiences for students through logistics-based study abroad courses to Holland (2004), Australia (2005, and forthcoming in May 2006), France-Algeria (forthcoming May 2007) and China (forthcoming in March 2008).

In sum, the UNF Transportation and Logistics program is extremely well-positioned as a flagship candidate, as it meets a vital strategic need of the regional community, it has already established itself well nationally, it has already shown the ability to attract outside funding through the two eminent scholar positions, and it is a strategic fit to the University's commitment and ideals and to the Coggin College strategic plan.

In the following, we will endeavor to show that the activity made feasible by the flagship funding would further advance the reputation of the institution locally and nationally, improve the curriculum substantially, increase the value of our graduates, address one of the few shortcomings in the program, have synergistic effects on the Coggin College, and open substantial resource leveraging opportunities.