



US Army Corps of Engineers

Institute for Water Resources

BUILDING STRONG®

Advanced Degree Program (2011)

Status: Completed

Purpose: The Corps of Engineers launched the Master's Degree Program in Water Resources Planning and Management in 2001 as part of its Planning Excellence Program. The Master's Program was developed by the Corps in partnership with the Universities Council on Water Resources to promote an inter-disciplinary water resources program. Since the program's inception the number of Corps applicants has been low largely due to cutbacks in training budgets in recent years. The current plan is to retool the program by: 1) expanding the number of participating universities, 2) increasing the emphasis on hybrid learning; and 3) promoting partnerships between districts and co-locational universities. These changes are warranted since the program as it presently exists is hampered by participants that are either too remote or too costly for prospective students. In FY10, it will be possible to progress towards co-locational options and identify study areas that should prove mutually beneficial to the Corps and the participating institutions. The Advanced Degree Program provides a strong multi-disciplinary foundation that addresses multi-objective planning. With further modification, it can also be expanded beyond the planning community to include other relevant disciplines such as regulatory. An expanded program with more participating universities would also allow for regionally-focused study plans to be developed. In order to advance towards a more integrative program more universities will need to be sought out and, ideally, organizations outside the Corps would sign on as partners. Additionally, new seminars will need to be created and certification options devised in order to attract a broader range of students and training options - from certification through to post-doctorate special studies areas. IWR would therefore serve as the hub for a unique broad-based training and studies program.

Objective: The existing degree program (www.waterresourceseducation.us) will need to be expanded to include new universities and new specialty areas. The specialty areas, developed in coordination with the participating universities, select districts and UCOWR, will be more reflective of the IWRM principles in order to attract a broader range of water resources practitioners. Site visits will be undertaken to consult with district managers, Corps leaders and university representatives to identify studies of joint interest. and to solicit partners to boost enrollments and promote inter-organizational cooperation. Qualifications needed for program participation include multi-departmental agreements, certification options and availability of distance learning courses. In addition to academic coordination, as the program proves successful it will be possible to explore the possibility of non-Corps training partnerships and shared training modules with related agencies, including the Bureau of Reclamation, DOE, EPA, and NRCS. An effort will also be made to involve the participation of foundations/organizations that have an interest in water resource

education, such as the American Water Resources Association and the Water Pollution Control Federation. The plan is to engage them in creative ways in program implementation and to seek financial support to defray student costs and to further promote the program.

Benefits: The aim of the Advanced Degree Program is to provide the Corps educational opportunities throughout the Corps community. By expanding the scope of the program we will produce partnerships with critical learning centers that are directly relevant to the Corps' Civil Works mission. Successful partnerships will be defined by the degrees and certifications received and the studies that are launched between the learning centers and Corps institutions.

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