

SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
Extended Mission (9)

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DEGREE PROGRAM TO SUPPORT FUTURE COMMERCIAL SPACE OPERATIONS

Abstract

An undergraduate degree in commercial space operations is currently under development at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. The University's expertise in aerospace education already spans a wide variety of degree programs directly related to the space and aerospace industry. Along with its proximity to the Florida Space Coast and the Kennedy Space Center, the new program will provide a cornerstone for the coming expansion of civilian and commercial space operations. The new degree program is being tailored to offer timely and necessary support for the healthy growth of commercial and civil space flight that already has the first public space flight scheduled for the coming year, as well as testbeds in orbit for future civil orbital missions. Moreover, NASA's recent efforts to turn over many low-Earth orbit human and cargo flights to commercial operators underscore the pressing need for these educational and operational training programs.

A profile of the development of this new program is outlined in this paper, along with a brief review of the evolving issues in civil space operations. Included is an examination of potential solutions to obstacles facing the nascent industry through higher education programs, projects, and research.