

**TOPIC:                   DEGREE AUTHORIZATION ACT – DENVER SCHOOL OF NURSING**

**PREPARED BY:       HEATHER DELANGE**

**I.       SUMMARY**

The Commission has responsibility to administer Title 23, Article 2 of the Colorado Revised Statutes, commonly referred to as the Degree Authorization Act. Commission policies and procedures have been developed to include an application process for any degree granting institutions that seek to begin operation in Colorado. Institutions meeting the applicable requirements are granted authority to operate upon the Commission's approval.

*Denver School of Nursing* (DSN) is an existing institution operating in Colorado with Probationary Authorization (formerly category II). DSN has applied for Full Authorization through the Degree Authorization Act. As required by the Degree Authorization Act policies, DSN's Colorado location has been fully approved by the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology. Documentation of the site visit and approval have been submitted. Department of Higher Education staff has reviewed the required documents and recommends the Commission approve Full Authorization.

**II.       BACKGROUND**

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) has statutory responsibility for administration of Title 23, Article 2 of the Colorado Revised Statutes, which authorizes certain types of institutions to offer degrees or degree credits. These are: (1) Colorado publicly-supported colleges and universities; (2) properly accredited private colleges and universities; (3) postsecondary seminaries and bible colleges; and (4) private occupational schools authorized by the Division of Private Occupational School. Persons or organizations that violate the provisions of the statute are subject to legal penalties.

All private colleges and universities, out of state public colleges and universities, and seminaries or bible colleges are required to register with the Colorado Department of Higher Education and to meet criteria found in CCHE Policy Section I Part J, Degree Authorization Act, in order to obtain authorization to offer degree programs in Colorado. Authorization must precede its offering any program of instruction, academic credits, or degrees; opening a place of business; soliciting students or enrollees; or offering educational support services.

The Commission administers the Degree Authorization Act by determining an institution's eligibility to operate pursuant to statute and CCHE policy. To apply for Full

Authorization, the institution must provide the Department of Higher Education proof of accreditation by a regional or national accrediting agency based on a site visit to the institution. Commission action is required for institutions to be authorized.

### **III. STAFF ANALYSIS**

*Denver School of Nursing* is currently an authorized institution with Probationary Authorization in Colorado. At its November 2008 meeting, the Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges of Technology (ACCSCT) voted to grant the Denver School of Nursing initial accreditation for a period of three years effective immediately. Denver School of Nursing is requesting Full Authorization based on the successful site visit by the accrediting agency.

### **IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

**Staff recommends that the Commission approve Full Authorization for the Denver School of Nursing.**

### **V. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION**

Copies of all relevant statute, policy, and the above institutions application materials are on file in the Academic Affairs Office.

### **STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

23-2-101 C.R.S.  
23-2-102 C.R.S.  
23-2-103 C.R.S.  
23-2-103.3 C.R.S.