

TOPIC: PROPOSAL TO OFFER A MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN SPORTS COACHING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO

PREPARED BY: MARGOT PLOTZ

I. SUMMARY

The University of Northern Colorado (UNC) has submitted a proposal to offer a Master of Arts degree in Sports Coaching. The proposed program intends to prepare coaches to become leaders in their prospective sporting fields by supporting the eight current coaching domains outlined in the National Standards for Sport Coaches document (National Association for Sport and Physical Education [NASPE], 2006). The current coaching standards as outlined by NASPE are also instructionally aligned and endorsed by the National Council for Accreditation of Coaching Education (a NASPE accreditation agency).

II. BACKGROUND

The following is summarized from the University of Northern Colorado's request:

The purpose and objective of the proposed degree program is to provide the opportunity for students to enhance their coaching knowledge and expertise and to improve their existing coaching practices through evaluation of current research. Coaching excellence is reliant upon a diverse body of knowledge in sport sciences that includes exercise physiology, sport pedagogy, biomechanics, motor learning and development, sport law, and sport psychology among other areas of study.

ROLE AND MISSION SUPPORT

This degree supports the role and mission of the University of Northern Colorado. The statutory mission states:

There is hereby established a university at Greeley to be known as the university of northern Colorado. The university shall be a comprehensive baccalaureate and specialized graduate research university with selective admission standards. The university of Northern Colorado shall be the primary institution for undergraduate and graduate degree programs for educational personnel preparation in the state of Colorado. The university shall offer masters and doctoral programs primarily in the field of education. C.R.S. 23-40-101

EVIDENCE OF STUDENT DEMAND

Every year, youth participation in sports increases as does the need for quality coaches. However, yearly there is a discrepancy between the number of positions and qualified

individuals capable of understanding and meeting the physiological, and sociological demands of the athletes. In 2006, NASPE published the National Coaching Standards that provided coach educators and practicing coaches with a knowledge structure to guide the coaching profession. Although the standards have been published for three years there are still limited master's level programs that provide the educational foundations to implement the national coaching standards successfully.

DUPLICATION/SIMILAR PROGRAMS IN THE STATE

At present there are no programs in the state of Colorado or neighboring states that have a Master of Arts in Sports Coaching. However, recently, Adams State College added a coaching emphasis to its already existing Masters of Arts in Human Performance and Physical Education program. The proposed degree program at UNC will be entirely online; the Adams State program that does requires one face-to-face capstone course.

III. STAFF ANALYSIS

Pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes 23-5-129 (6)(b), Department staff finds that the proposed graduate program is in the field of education. It fits the centrality of the institution's statutory role and mission to be the primary institution for undergraduate and graduate degree programs for educational personnel preparation in the state of Colorado.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Master of Arts in Sports Coaching is consistent with the University of Northern Colorado's campus role and mission. Staff recommends that the Commission approve this degree.

V. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Copies of all relevant materials are on file in the Academic Affairs office and are available upon request.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

C.R.S. §23-5-129(6)(b)

(6) (b) Need not consult with nor obtain approval from the Colorado commission on higher education to create modify, or eliminate academic and vocational programs offered by the institution, so long as such creations, modifications, and eliminations are consistent with the institution's statutory role and mission. Institutions shall submit information to the department demonstrating that the creation or modification of an academic or career and technical education program is consistent with the institution's statutory role and mission. The Colorado commission on higher education shall have the authority to override the creation or modification of an academic or vocational program if the change made by the governing board is inconsistent with the institution's statutory role and mission.

