

TOPIC: PROPOSAL TO OFFER DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE (DNP) DEGREE AT COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY - PUEBLO

PREPARED BY: MARGOT PLOTZ, ACADEMIC POLICY OFFICER

I. SUMMARY

This consent item recommends approval of Colorado State University–Pueblo’s (CSU-P) proposal to offer a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree. If approved, this program will be CSU-P’s first doctoral-level degree.

II. BACKGROUND

The following is summarized from CSU-P’s proposal:

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree has been designed to prepare nurses for the highest level of clinical practice in the profession of nursing. As the nation reforms its health care system, the American Association of the Colleges of Nursing, along with seven Nurse Practitioner organizations, have recommended moving the current level of preparation necessary for Nurse Practitioner from the Master’s degree to the doctorate-level by the year 2015. Therefore, the CSU-Pueblo Department of Nursing is proposing to transition the existing Master of Science Nurse Practitioner Programs (Acute Care, Acute Care/Family and Psychiatric - Mental Health) to the DNP.

ROLE AND MISSION SUPPORT

This degree supports the role and mission of Colorado State University-Pueblo, which was modified by the Colorado general Assembly in 2011 in order to accommodate the development of additional graduate-level programs. CSU-P’s statutory role and mission reads as follows:

There is hereby established a university at Pueblo, to be known as Colorado State University - Pueblo, which shall be a regional, comprehensive university, with moderately selective admissions standards. The University shall offer a broad array of baccalaureate programs with a strong professional focus and a firm grounding in the liberal arts and sciences. The university shall also offer a limited number of graduate programs. C.R.S. 23-31.5-101

EVIDENCE OF NEED

The proposed DNP program fulfills a local, regional, and national need for doctoral prepared advanced practice nurses. The proposed program is designed to be in full compliance with professional standards for the practice doctorate as put forth by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN). Based upon the growing complexity of health care compounded by an escalating demand for medical services, burgeoning growth in scientific knowledge, and the increasing sophistication in technology, the nursing profession's current practice of preparing advanced practice nurses in Master's degree programs is no longer adequate.

DUPLICATION

Existing programs in Colorado similar to the one proposed by CSU-P include those offered by:

- University of Colorado - Colorado Springs
- Colorado Mesa University
- University of Northern Colorado
- University of Colorado - Denver

The CSU-P DNP program will primarily draw students from the rural, diverse, and often economically-disadvantaged southeastern and southern counties of the state. Creating the DNP at CSU-P will give the institution the opportunity to provide the highest quality education possible for advanced practice nurses in southern and southeastern Colorado and the San Luis Valley. Additionally, each DNP program in Colorado offers unique emphasis areas. CSU-P offers the only Adult/Geriatric Acute Care Nurse Practitioner and the only dual emphasis Adult/Geriatric Acute Care/Family Nurse Practitioner in Colorado.

III. STAFF ANALYSIS

Pursuant to Colorado Revised Statute 23-5-129 (6)(b), department staff finds that CSU-P's proposed Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree is consistent with CSU-P's role and mission.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission approve Colorado State University - Pueblo's proposal to offer a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) 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) While operating pursuant to a performance contract negotiated pursuant to this section, the governing board of a state institution of higher education:

(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.