

**TOPIC: DEGREE AUTHORIZATION ACT: RECOMMENDATION FOR
STATUS CHANGE – ROCKY VISTA UNIVERSITY – COLLEGE
OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE**

PREPARED BY: HEATHER DELANGE, ACADEMIC POLICY OFFICER

I. SUMMARY

This action item recommends a status change for Rocky Vista University – College of Osteopathic Medicine from Probationary Authorization to Full Authorization. This change is recommended as a result of a change in the institution’s accreditation status.

II. BACKGROUND

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education has statutory responsibility for administration of Title 23, Article 2 of the Colorado Revised Statutes, commonly referred to as the Degree Authorization Act, which sets out the terms under which the following types of institutions may offer degrees or degree credits: (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, seminaries and bible colleges are required to register with the Colorado Department of Higher Education and to meet criteria in CCHE Policy Section I Part J, Degree Authorization Act, in order to have authorization to offer degrees within Colorado. Such authorization must be received by the institution prior to: 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.

II. STAFF ANALYSIS

In 2007, the Colorado Commission on Higher Education voted to approve initial authorization of Rocky Vista University – College of Osteopathic Medicine. Since that time, Rocky Vista University has continued to work toward accreditation with two accrediting agencies: the American Osteopathic Association Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA) and the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (HLC).

At its April 2012 meeting, the American Osteopathic Association's Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA) awarded Rocky Vista University an initial award of accreditation. Rocky Vista University hosted COCA for its comprehensive survey evaluation February 1-3, 2012. The next comprehensive survey evaluation is scheduled for Fall 2018. The Higher Learning Commission has not yet taken action on Rocky Vista University's application for accreditation.

Rocky Vista University's receipt of accreditation from the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation (COCA) qualifies the institution to move from Probationary Status to Full Authorization under CCHE Policy Section I Part J, Degree Authorization Act.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission change the status of authorization for Rocky Vista University from Probationary to Full.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

C.R.S. §23-2-103.3