

TOPIC: DEGREE AUTHORIZATION ACT: REQUEST FOR STATUS CHANGE – FLORIDA HOSPITAL COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

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I. SUMMARY

This item recommends an authorization status change from Probationary Authorization to Full Authorization for the Florida Hospital College of Health Sciences (FHCHS).

II. BACKGROUND

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) 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 certain types of institutions¹ may offer degrees or degree credits. 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 (DHE) and to meet criteria in CCHE Policy Section I Part J, Degree Authorization Act, in order to be granted 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. Policy requires Commission action for institutions to be authorized at any level.

II. STAFF ANALYSIS

FHCHS is requesting full authorization based on its most recent site visit and subsequent reaffirmation of accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), one of the nation's six regional accrediting bodies. FHCHS is a private, non-profit institution headquartered out of Orlando, Florida that specializes in Nursing and Allied Health Education and has held accreditation from SACS since 1996. Under the Degree Authorization Act rules and regulations, an institution will hold probationary authorization until an on-site review from

¹ (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 Schools.

the accreditation body is conducted and approved. The Denver campus of Florida Hospital College of Health Sciences was reviewed March 8-10, 2011. The Board of Trustees of SACS Commission on Colleges reaffirmed the accreditation at its December 2011 meeting.

SACS recognizes the Associate of Science in Radiography and the proposed Bachelor of Science in Nursing offered from its Denver campus. The Nursing program is awaiting approval from the Colorado State Board of Nursing. Also in the plans for growth is a degree program in Sonography.

A copy of the report of the affirmation committee is on file in the Academic Affairs division.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the change of authorization status from Probationary to Full for the Florida Hospital College of Health Sciences.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

C.R.S. §23-2-103.3 (2)