

**TOPIC: RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY
IN SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY AT UNIVERSITY OF
COLORADO DENVER**

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FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

I. SUMMARY

This item recommends approval for University of Colorado Denver (UCD) to offer a Doctor of Psychology in School Psychology (Psy.D.) degree. This program will eventually replace the currently offered Educational Specialist (Ed.S.) program when all students currently enrolled in the Ed.S., who do not want to switch to the Psy.D., have graduated.

II. BACKGROUND

COMMISSION AUTHORITY

The Colorado Commission on Higher Education's role and responsibility in the review of new academic programs at institutions operating under a performance contract is defined in §23-5-129, which states that:

(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.

OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED PROGRAM

The following is summarized from UCD's proposal:

The School Psychology program in the School of Education and Human Development (SEHD) proposes to develop an American Psychological Association (APA) accredited Doctorate of Psychology (Psy.D.) degree program in School Psychology. The degree program will prepare school psychologists capable of providing the best mental health

services and supports for all students in their schools and districts. Students will undertake a systematic and sequential plan of study of integrated didactic and applied courses that will provide them with a foundational knowledge base, as well as the skills to integrate the science and evidence of the profession, to enhance the practice and theory of school psychology. The program is interdisciplinary, interweaving education and psychology. The curriculum was designed by faculty in the SEHD in consultation with the Department of Psychology in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The program will include all the requirements of the current Ed. S. program as well as an additional year of coursework, practica experience and a capstone project. The courses that will be added to the Ed. S. course of study will include an externship, additional research methodology and statistics courses, and courses offered through the CU Denver Department of Psychology. This additional focus on research, will prepare graduates who are able to apply research discoveries to their practice.

Building upon the existing Ed. S. program will enable an efficient transition to the Psy. D. program while maintaining the alignment of both programs with accreditation and professional standards. The CU Denver School Psychology Program, guided by the belief that all children can learn, is dedicated to providing both breadth and depth of professional training in a theoretically-integrated, research-based learning environment. The Program prepares ethical practitioners, scientists and scholars who are life-long learners committed to enhancing the well-being of youth, their families, and the systems they serve. The Program achieves this by engaging in scholarly activities that advance the field of school psychology, maintaining a modern curriculum that employs aspects of multiculturalism and diversity, examining emerging trends in the profession, conducting continuous outcomes assessment for program improvement, and providing support to our graduates. The program is based on the *Accreditation Domains and Standards* of the American Psychological Association and the *Model for Comprehensive and Integrated School Psychological Services* endorsed by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). This model and these standards promote the following domains of psychology: data-based decision-making and accountability; consultation and collaboration; interventions and mental health services to develop social and life skills; school-wide practices to promote learning; preventative and responses services; family-school collaboration services; diversity in development and learning; research and program evaluation; and legal, ethical and professional practice. The SEHD Outcome Assessment Framework specifies the six major goals for this program:

- Increase the impact on K-12 student learning;
- Increase the content and pedagogical content knowledge of graduates;
- Improve on-the-job performance;
- Foster leadership in equity and social justice;
- Augment professional (job) persistence and retention; and
- Nurture professional dispositions.

Additional information on this proposed degree, unrelated to fit with statutory role and mission, is attached (Attachment A).

ROLE AND MISSION SUPPORT

This degree supports UCD's statutory role and mission, which states in part:

*(b) ...The Denver campus shall offer baccalaureate, master's, and a limited number of doctoral degree programs, emphasizing those that serve the needs of the Denver metropolitan area...
C.R.S. 23-20-101(1)*

III. STAFF ANALYSIS

Pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes 23-5-129(6)(b), department staff finds that UCD's proposed Doctor of Psychology in School Psychology (Psy.D.) degree is consistent with the institution's statutory role and mission.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission approve University of Colorado Denver's proposal to offer a Doctor of Psychology in School Psychology (Psy.D.) degree.

V. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

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

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

C.R.S. §23-5-129 Governing boards - performance contract - authorization - operations