TOPIC: DEGREE AUTHORIZATION ACT – HUNTINGTON COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

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I. SUMMARY

This item concerns Huntington College of Health Sciences’ (HCHS) application under the Degree Authorization Act for probationary authorization to operate in Colorado. HCHS is an existing institution headquartered in Tennessee and currently accredited by the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC), a U.S. Department of Education recognized national accrediting body. Department staff commissioned a review team consisting of two evaluators. Department of Higher Education staff have reviewed their report and based on the findings of the review team recommend the Commission not approve probationary authorization for the Huntington College of Health Sciences.

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 certain types of institutions 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 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 Department administers the Degree Authorization Act by empanelling an evaluation team to determine the institution’s ability to operate pursuant to statute and CCHE policy. Commission action is required by policy in order for institutions to be authorized at any level.

III. STAFF ANALYSIS

The HCHS is applying for probationary authorization. It offers the Associate of Science, Bachelor of Science and Masters of Science degrees in Nutrition along with six diploma

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.
programs in nutrition-related fields and business management. The institution has been operating in Tennessee since 1985 as an independent study institution.

As required by the Degree Authorization Act, HCHS submitted initial documentation concerning its organization, program and finances. Department staff hired an evaluation team to review the application. Staff provided the evaluation team with statutory references, the HCHS application, and supporting documents and asked the team to assess whether the institution had the ability to provide appropriate student services at the proposed Colorado site and had the financial ability to support all operations at the new site. The evaluation team noted deficiencies in these areas in the final report (attached).

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission not approve Probationary Authorization for the Huntington College of Health Sciences.

V. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Copies of all relevant statute, policy, and the above institutions application materials are on file in the Academic Affairs Office.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

C.R.S. §23-2-103.3