

TOPIC: RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING AT COLORADO MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

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I. SUMMARY

This item recommends approval for Colorado Mountain College (CMC) to offer a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree. Senate Bill 10-101 amended §23-71-102(1), C.R.S. to read, "...Colorado mountain college, in addition to its mission as a junior college, may also offer no more than five baccalaureate degree programs as its board of trustees determines appropriate to address the needs of the communities within its service area..."

II. BACKGROUND

COMMISSION AUTHORITY

The Commission's role and responsibility in the review of new baccalaureate programs at Colorado Mountain College is defined in §23-71-133(1), C.R.S., which states that the Commission shall make its determination based on the following criteria:

- (a) Whether Colorado Mountain College can demonstrate workforce and student demand for the baccalaureate degree program by providing data;
- (b) Whether Colorado Mountain College can demonstrate regional and professional accreditation requirements, when applicable, and compliance with those requirements as deemed appropriate at both the institutional and program levels;
- (c) Whether Colorado Mountain College can demonstrate that its provision of the baccalaureate degree program is the most cost-effective method of providing the baccalaureate degree program in its service area; and
- (d) Whether Colorado Mountain College can provide a cost-benefit analysis showing that the additional baccalaureate degree program will not create a negative impact for the college or require additional state-appropriated moneys to operate.

III. DEMONSTRATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH 23-71-133(1), C.R.S.

The following is summarized from CMC's proposal:

OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED PROGRAM

The Colorado Mountain College Baccalaureate of Science in Nursing (BSN) Program provides an academic progression from the Associate Degree in Nursing Program, which

includes the foundational knowledge, skills, and competencies to practice as a Registered Nurse. The BSN program expands that knowledge base to incorporate more advanced knowledge, skills, and competencies in community care, focused populations, leadership, management, and research. The BSN program builds on the five roles of the nurse by incorporating enhanced knowledge related to each role (Provider, Advocate, Teacher, Manager, and Member of the Profession).

DEMONSTRATION OF WORKFORCE AND STUDENT DEMAND

CMC nursing program's addition of a BSN degree would provide for a seamless academic progression for the graduates of the Associate Degree program. The BSN degree will serve as a platform for additional educational progression to masters and doctoral levels of nursing education at Colorado Universities. Nursing graduates require additional competencies to be prepared for shifting health care demands. Advancing the roles of nurses will be necessary, as well as removal of barriers, to allow nurses to function to the full extent of their educational preparation and skills. To achieve higher levels of advanced practice nurses, the Institute of Medicine (IOM), an independent, nonprofit organization that works outside of government to provide advice to decision makers and the public, advocates 80% of the nursing workforce be educated to the BSN degree level by 2020. The creation of the BSN degree program will align the CMC nursing program with the direction outlined by the IOM and will position CMC as a leader in shaping the change of nursing education and advancing the health of our rural communities. A 2013 Community Poll conducted by CMC, to gauge interest in bachelor's level offerings in the service area, pointed to nursing as one of the priorities.

During 2011-12 and 2012-13, there were 74 students in CMC's two year nursing program and 32 graduates from the program. Current CMC nursing students and graduates surveyed revealed that nearly 100% plan to continue their nursing education to improve job opportunities. While the CMC nursing program is of outstanding quality with high National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) pass rates and employment of graduates, adding the BSN would enhance employment opportunities for CMC graduates and meet expectations of health care employers.

DEMONSTRATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH REGIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS

Colorado Mountain College is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). The BSN program has been submitted to HLC for approval. The CMC Associate Degree (AD) Nursing Program is fully approved by the Colorado State Board of Nursing (CSBON-DORA) for pre-licensure professional nursing education programs and is nationally accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). Re-accreditation with ACEN for the AD nursing program will occur simultaneously with the accreditation of this proposed BSN program in 2016. This BSN program is a "post-

licensure” program and is not under the authority of the Colorado State Board of Nursing. Dr. Roberta Hills, Education Specialist at CSBON-DORA, has been informed of CMC’s intent to seek Commission approval for the BSN program and has provided positive supportive communications towards program development. All students admitted to the BSN will have an unencumbered registered nurse license in the State of Colorado and the program will have no impact on their professional licensure status, but can increase their employment opportunities due to employers’ preferences for advanced education levels.

Upon approval by the Commission and HLC, the Director of Nursing Education will notify ACEN. An ACEN candidacy status application will be submitted prior to the enrollment of students. Candidacy status is a two year process toward full accreditation. ACEN accreditation decisions are retroactive to the first day of the degree program’s ACEN on site evaluation.

ACEN has six standards: Mission and Administrative, Faculty and Staff, Students, Curriculum, Resources and Outcomes. The ACEN accreditation standards are consistent in the requirements for both the Associate and Baccalaureate degrees with few differences. One difference in the accreditation standard II that is worth noting requires that 25% of the full time nursing faculty must hold a doctorate or be enrolled in a doctoral program. CMC meets this criterion as 50% of CMC nursing faculty hold a doctorate or are enrolled in a doctoral program.

DEMONSTRATION THAT THIS PROVISION OF THE PROGRAM IS THE MOST COST-EFFECTIVE METHOD OF PROVIDING THE PROGRAM IN CMC’S SERVICE AREA

It is not cost effective for students to relocate or travel to the Front Range to complete a BSN to meet the community healthcare demands for rural critical access hospitals and service areas. CMC’s request for approval to offer its first bachelor’s degrees is driven by a desire to meet the needs of its 12,000 square mile service area by providing greater access to higher education and fulfilling the college’s mission (“Creating better futures for our students, our communities, our partners and our team members”) and vision (“First Choice”-For our students, employees, communities and businesses). The college’s service area is currently lacking a physical institution that offers BSN degrees for area residents who want to attend college locally. The necessity of relocation or extensive travel, time commitment, and expense creates a hardship to students and their family’s resources.

Interviews with current nursing students for the past two years reflect that 100% plan to seek a BSN. During 2011-12 and 2012-13 there were 74 students in CMC’s two-year nursing program. Also, there were 32 graduates from this nursing program in 2011-12 and 34 in 2012-13 that desire to advance to a BSN degree. Recent employer survey responses and members of the nursing program advisory board have indicated the desire of the health care industry to increase the educational levels of professional nurses.

The budget process and planning has anticipated at least an initial enrollment of 30, with continuing enrollment to 60 students each academic year. Further development and implementation of the BSN will be incorporated within the 2014-2017 strategic planning process. The current strategic plan and its accompanying college-wide balanced score card has been helping the college measure its progress on key performance indicators related to student learning, employees, partnerships, enrollment, programs and college finances. The new planning process and monitoring with a balanced score card will assure the college is fiscally responsible in sustaining the BSN program. Strategic planning has fully supported all current programs at the college and is expected to create and foster support for the proposed BSN. Past strategic planning has provided full support for the Associate Degree Nursing program, providing for all needs in the most cost effective method and providing past and current nursing students the opportunity to obtain a quality education in the areas where they live.

COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS SHOWING THE PROGRAM WILL NOT CREATE A NEGATIVE IMPACT FOR CMC OR REQUIRE ADDITIONAL STATE-APPROPRIATED MONEYS

In order to be approved by HLC to offer bachelor's degrees, CMC had to create and show a sustainable financial model. This model was shown to HLC reviewers in April 2011. For this, a bachelor's finance team was developed and it provides regular updates to the Board of Trustees. The comprehensive model includes all costs, FT faculty, adjunct faculty, materials, supplies, equipment and professional development. On the revenue side, the college conservatively looked at the anticipated enrollments. To closely track the impact of bachelor's degrees at CMC, the college set up a \$5 million Revolving Fund from which bachelor's degrees could be shown to break even. At the current rate of enrollment growth, the college's two existing bachelor's degrees, B.S. Business Administration and B.A. Sustainability Studies (both approved by the Commission March 4, 2011), break even in the 7th year with \$3.1 million left in Revolving Fund.

CMC has selected five baccalaureate degrees to best meet the needs of students in a financially responsible way. As in most college's financial models, the lower cost programs help pay for the higher cost nursing program.

In the financial analysis presented to the CMC Board of Trustees in June 2013, Table 1 below shows the financial model assumptions that were presented for In-District (ID) enrollments, In-State (IS) enrollments, and Out-of-State (OS) enrollments. With these assumptions, the financial model shows that with the addition of three new programs, it is anticipated that breakeven will occur in year 10. At that point in time, the bachelor reserve balance in the Revolving Fund is projected to be \$2,193,593.

Table 1: Financial Model

| | BSBA | BASS | BSN | TE | BAS |
|-------------------------|--|---------------------------|---|--|--|
| Residency Mix | ID 81% IS 8% OS 11% | ID 81% IS 8% OS 11% | ID 90% IS 9% OS 1% | ID 85% IS 10% OS 5% | ID 81% IS 8% OS 11% |
| Tuition Growth Rate | 100/200 Level: 7% every other year starting in 14/15 300/400 Level: 9% in 14/15 and 7% every other year thereafter | | | | |
| Differential Tuition | None | None | \$40 per credit | \$25 per credit | None |
| FTE Growth Rate | 2% annually through 15/16 3% annually thereafter | | Program Projected FTE reduced by 25%, 3% growth annually | Program Projected FTE reduced by 25%, Ramp up growth over six years | Ramp up growth over first three years, then 3% annually thereafter |
| Full-Time Faculty | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | None |
| Program Specific Staff | None | None | Admin Assistant (FT) | Program Director (FT) & Admin Assistant (PT) | None |
| Foundation Contribution | None | None | \$559,276 grant over 2 years | \$500,000 spread over 5 years | None |
| Staff Positions | 1 Fin Aid Specialist, 1 Academic Credentials Evaluator, 1 Admissions Rep, 1 Instructional/Reference Librarian, 1 Career Services Director, and 1 Customer Support Specialist | | | | |

*In the top row, BSBA = B.S. Business Administration (approved in March 2011), BASS = B.A. Sustainability Studies (approved in March 2011), BSN = B.S. Nursing (this proposal), TE = Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies with Teacher Education (proposed), and BAS = Bachelor of Applied Science (proposed).

Table 2 below shows FTE projections for CMC's five bachelor degree programs. Year 1 is 2011-12. The FTE for Years 1, 2 and 3 are actual numbers. This proposed BSN would start in Year 4, 2014-15.

Table 2: FTE Projections for CMC's Five Bachelor Degrees

| | Yr 1 | Yr 2 | Yr 3 | Yr 4 | Yr 5 | Yr 6 | Yr 7 | Yr 8 | Yr 9 | Yr10 |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| B.S. Business Admin | 36 | 111 | 110 | 112 | 114 | 117 | 121 | 125 | 128 | 132 |
| B.A. Sustainability Studies | 66 | 171 | 168 | 171 | 175 | 180 | 185 | 191 | 197 | 203 |
| B.A. Interdisc. Studies w/TE | | | | | 18 | 41 | 48 | 57 | 68 | 72 |
| Bach. Applied Science | | | | | 30 | 63 | 66 | 70 | 72 | 74 |
| B.S. Nursing | | | | 20 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 51 | 52 | 54 |

Faculty for the BSN: If the faculty is adjunct, the impact would be absorbed within the campus current adjunct office space. However, office space will be made available or, at

minimum, a shared space will be needed. Since the Associate Degree Nursing Program is well established, there are a few new instructional equipment and educational resources required for BSN program. New equipment needed include faculty office space with standard office equipped with computer, desk, phone and file cabinets. Books and journal subscriptions on nursing research and informatics and healthcare finance are being purchased. Minor nursing lab equipment will be purchased for advanced physical assessment tools for reflex testing, software for advance case studies and simulation for community health nursing.

Table 3 below shows net revenue data for all five bachelor degrees. CMC has actual data for years 1, 2 and 3. Subsequent years are based on very granular cost and revenue analysis. All values are in thousands. Year 1 is 2011-12 school year. The B.S. Nursing is shown to start in Year 4, the 2014-14 school year. The non-linear pattern of costs is due to several factors. The values can jump substantially due to the application of foundation gifts to various programs. The break-even net revenue value funds is in Year 10, the 2020-21 school years. At first glance, it appears the break-even is in Year 8, but the proposed Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies with Teacher Education incurs some costs in Year 9.

Table 3: Net Revenue in Thousands for all 5 Bachelors

| | Yr1 | Yr2 | Yr 3 | Yr 4 | Yr 5 | Yr6 | Yr7 | Yr8 | Yr9 | Yr 10 |
|---|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| B.S. Business Admin (approved) | -197 | -184 | -248 | -142 | -114 | -51 | -46 | -6 | -2 | 41 |
| B.A. Sustainability Studies (approved) | -220 | -132 | -175 | 21 | 69 | 173 | 167 | 219 | 230 | 302 |
| B.A. Interdisc. Studies w/TE (proposed) | -16 | -38 | -92 | -25 | -122 | -236 | -193 | -180 | -261 | (242) |
| Bach. Applied Science (proposed) | 0 | -30 | 0 | -5 | 48 | 130 | 133 | 166 | 194 | 204 |
| B.S. Nursing (proposed) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 29 | -256 | -190 | -196 | -192 | -200 | (195) |
| Total | (236) | (200) | (267) | 20 | (261) | (123) | (89) | 13 | (37) | 69 |
| <i>Foundation Gifts</i> | <i>0</i> | <i>0</i> | <i>258</i> | <i>400</i> | <i>100</i> | <i>100</i> | <i>100</i> | | | |

*Yr 1 = 2011-12; Yr10 = 2020-21

Library for the BSN: CMC will increase resources for the library, both human and other. Some library requirements for the BSN are already in place because of the current associate's degree in nursing. Resources for research and literature searches of nursing peer reviewed journals will be required. Reference materials related to beginning research projects will be determined by nursing faculty and recommendations for purchases provided.

Infrastructure: No capital equipment will be needed. CMC has the basic infrastructure in place to offer this degree, since on-site nursing education is already part of our two year

mission. With current data and several projected growth levels, CMC anticipates little impact on facilities at our current utilization rate. With the availability of expanded hours and days, no campus location would be over-utilized for classroom space. There is a Smart technology computer system with IVS equipment available in each classroom. There are two designated nursing labs at each location and they are equipped with state of the art high fidelity patient care areas containing simulation manikins, models and other technologies to support student learning outcomes. Canvas learning management system will be utilized for hybrid classroom management system already in place for virtual on-line learning courses at CMC.

Although the college's primary source of funding is property taxes, and real estate values have declined over the past two years, the real estate market has been improving since October, 2010 and any related financial shortfalls have been short-lived. CMC has set aside money specifically for its bachelor's degrees. Should additional funding be needed, the college has 28% of its budget in other reserves to tide it through. Finally, the college's facilities are mostly "set" for the next few years, so the funds normally spent on new buildings could absorb any property tax shortages. In addition, a Colorado Health Foundation Grant was obtained by the College Foundation for the nursing program. The CMC Nursing Program has been awarded a two year grant for the amount of \$559,276.00.

IV. STAFF ANALYSIS

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook, (<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/Healthcare/Registered-nurses.htm#tab-6>), "Employment of registered nurses is expected to grow 26 percent from 2010 to 2020, faster than the average for all occupations." And "registered nurses with at least a bachelor's degree in nursing (BSN) will have better job prospects than those without one."

The CMC Board of Trustees approved the BSN at its June 17th, 2013 meeting. At its April 1, 2004 meeting, the Commission granted a waiver for nursing baccalaureate degrees to exceed the 120 credit cap and go up to 126 credits. This proposed BSN meets that criterion with 122 credits.

GT PATHWAYS WAIVER

CMC is also requesting a waiver from having to include the thirty-one credits of gtPathways curriculum in the BSN's general education core. This is in line with waivers given to other degree programs with additional requirements (see the June 7, 2013 Commission meeting). The BSN is not a traditional Liberal Arts & Sciences degree and, as such, does not map well to the gtPathways curriculum. The general education core for the BSN is in line with the gtPathways competency requirement that ensures "that students demonstrate competency in reading, critical thinking, written communications, mathematics, and technology" [23-1-

125(3), C.R.S.]. This degree, as designed, meets state requirements, even though it does not contain the entire gtPathways curriculum.

V. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree at Colorado Mountain College and grant a waiver not to have to include the thirty-one credit gtPathways curriculum as the general education core of the degree.

VI. SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

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

VII. STATUTORY AUTHORITY

§23-71-133, C.R.S. Junior colleges - Approval of baccalaureate degrees