

TOPIC: DEGREE AUTHORIZATION ACT: MOUNT ST. MARY'S COLLEGE – REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION AS A PLACE OF BUSINESS

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I. SUMMARY

This item recommends authorization as a place of business (with no instruction) for Mount St. Mary's College to operate an administrative office in Colorado pursuant to the Degree Authorization Act.

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. The Act sets out the terms by which the Commission may authorize properly accredited private colleges and universities, out-of-state public colleges and universities, and seminaries and bible colleges to offer degrees or degree credits in Colorado. Persons or organizations that violate the provisions of the statute are subject to legal penalties. These institutions must receive authorization by the Commission 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. Pursuant to state law, a private college or university is required to be accredited on the basis of an on-site review in Colorado by a nationally recognized regional or national accrediting association.

II. STAFF ANALYSIS

Mount St. Mary's College is applying for authorization to operate a place of business, in the form of an administrative office, in Colorado. Mount St. Mary's College is a private, not-for-profit postsecondary institution located in Los Angeles, California. The Senior College and University Commission of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC), one of the six regional accreditors recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, first accredited the college in 1949 and it remains accredited by that agency.

As required by the Degree Authorization Act, Mount St. Mary's College submitted the initial documentation concerning its organization, programs, and finances. Department staff determined that the activities that Mount St. Mary's College describes for the Colorado office do not necessitate the need for full authorization. Rather, the proposed activities meet the definition for the authorization of a place of business. The definition for authorization as a place of

business allows an institution to operate out of a Colorado office so long as the site does not offer instruction. Specifically, the Colorado office will house staff that focus on:

- Recruitment
- Instructional design
- Student support services
- Administrative activities

Pursuant to Section I, Part J, of the approved CCHE policies, institutions awarded the place of business authorization must renew annually to ensure that the activities occurring from the Colorado site do not trigger the need for full authorization. Additionally, institutions authorized under the place of business status are subject to the deceptive trade practices provision as found in 23-2-104, C.R.S.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission approve authorization as a place of business for Mount St. Mary's College.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

C.R.S. §23-2-103.3

C.R.S. §23-2-103.8 (5)