

BACKGROUND

Jefferson Community College

Associate of Applied Science degree in Histotechnology

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION

This program clearly meets Regents' standards for associate degree programs. There were no serious concerns raised in the review.

In 2006, the American Society of Clinical Pathology mandated changes in the requirements for certification of histotechnicians. Instead of completing a one-year hospital based certificate program, individuals interested in this profession must now complete an associate degree program with a minimum of sixty (60) semester hours. The sixty semester hours must include a combination of 12 semester hours in biology and chemistry, from a regionally accredited college or university.

A histotechnician prepares tiny sections of the body tissues obtained from biopsies removed during surgery or an autopsy for microscopic examination by a pathologist to aid in the diagnosis of the illness of the individual.

In response to a request from five area hospitals, health care providers and clinics in southeast Ohio, West Virginia and Pennsylvania, Jefferson Community College has developed the program to meet current and future needs for trained educated histotechnicians. Working in partnership with area health care providers, the program meets the new requirements of the American Society of Clinical Pathology.

The program provides a new career path for high school students thinking of a career in health care and a new employment opportunity for displaced workers in the region.

In addition to the general education courses, the curriculum includes courses in medical terminology, human anatomy, physiology, and principles of biology, chemistry and several required practicum experiences. Health care providers in the region will provide the practicum learning experiences. Students completing the program will be eligible to take the national certification examination of the American Society of Clinical Pathology.

There are no similar programs offered within 35 miles of the college. Jefferson Community College consulted with Youngstown University in the development of this program and a faculty member from Youngstown University served on the college's Histotechnician Advisory Committee formed to assist in the development of the program's curriculum.

The college is financially prepared to offer this program and incur the start-up costs needed based on three years of projected student enrollment.

Graduates of the program will find career opportunities with various local and regional hospitals, public health care facilities, medical centers, clinics and some research facilities and laboratories.