

BACKGROUND AND REQUEST

Cedarville University Master of Science in Nursing

RECOMMENDATION

Cedarville University meets the Chancellor's standards for graduate programs, and the review team recommends provisional authorization for the Master of Science in Nursing degree program. Provisional authorization will continue through June 30, 2013, contingent upon continuing accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (HLC), and contingent upon the Chancellor's written approval of progress reports that demonstrate satisfactory progress toward compliance with all standards. The Chancellor shall withdraw authorization if, in the Chancellor's judgment, the progress reports do not demonstrate satisfactory progress in any area or if the institution is sanctioned by HLC. Progress reports are to be submitted by December 31, 2010, 2011, and 2012. A follow-up review will be performed prior to June 30, 2013 to determine continued authorization.

Profile: Cedarville University, located in Cedarville, Ohio, is an independent institution affiliated with the Reformed Presbyterian Church. Originally established in 1887, the university today serves nearly 3,000 students and equips them "for lifelong leadership and service through an education marked by excellence and grounded in biblical truth."

Accreditation/Authorization: Cedarville University is regionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (HLC) and possesses specialized accreditation for several of its professional programs. The Chancellor has authorized the institution since November 1969.

Program Information: The university is requesting authorization to deliver a Master of Science of Nursing (MSN) degree program. The degree provides "in-depth, professional and advanced practice study for nurses to expand their knowledge of health care delivery, clinical expertise, nursing leadership, use of evidence based research, and academic scholarship grounded in biblical truth."

The program was developed in alignment with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing's *Essentials of Master's Education for Advanced Practice Nursing* and *Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs*, the National League for Nursing's *Core Competencies of Nurse Educators*, and the American Nurses Credentialing Center's *Advanced Board Certification of Public Health Nurse* test content outlines. Students may choose from three program foci: Family Nurse Practitioner (43 total program hours), Nurse Educator (41 hours), or Global Health Ministries (42 hours). The program includes a clinical component and culminates with students completing either a master's project or thesis.

Review Results: The review team noted several strengths in the review, including alignment of program and institutional missions, alignment of program goals and objectives with professional accreditation standards, use of an external advisory committee to support the program, university-wide involvement in the development of the program, an assessment plan for the program, faculty qualifications

consistent with MSN programs, strong student support resources, and the university's commitment to building a new health sciences building, slated to open in 2012.

The team also noted some areas of non compliance with the Chancellor's standards and recommended that the institution: clarify admissions processes; explain how the MSN program builds on the competencies of its Bachelor of Science in Nursing program; clearly state in marketing materials the expectation of statistics as a prerequisite to the program; clearly define the delivery method in course syllabi; and develop a template for affiliation agreements that addresses all components of the professional standards for clinical placement of MSN students in their respective tracks.

The institution responded appropriately to the recommendations of the consultants' report by demonstrating how the recommendations were accepted and integrated into the proposed program, or, in the case of recommendations that could only be complied with over time, by presenting a clear plan for the implementation of the recommendations and a timeline for such.

Recommendation to the Chancellor: Cedarville University meets the Chancellor's standards for graduate programs, and the review team recommends provisional authorization for the Master of Science in Nursing degree program. Provisional authorization will continue through June 30, 2013, contingent upon continuing accreditation from HLC, and contingent upon the Chancellor's written approval of progress reports that demonstrate satisfactory progress toward compliance with all standards. The Chancellor shall withdraw authorization if, in the Chancellor's judgment, the progress reports do not demonstrate satisfactory progress in any area or if the institution is sanctioned by HLC. Progress reports are to be submitted by December 31, 2010, 2011, and 2012. A follow-up review will be performed prior to June 30, 2013 to determine continued authorization.