SACS COC™

SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS
COMMISSION ON COLLEGES

May 17, 2018

Dr. T. Rhett Brown
President
Wingate University
220 North Camden Street
Campus Box 3055
Wingate, NC 28174

Dear Dr. Brown:

Thank you for your letter of December 13, 2017, transmitting the prospectus for the new Doctor of Occupational Therapy (O.T.D.) degree program, effective fall 2019.

The Doctor of Occupational Therapy, which is consistent with the mission of Wingate University, is designed to prepare students for the National Board Certification for Occupational Therapists Examination which will enable them to apply for state licensure and begin their occupational therapy careers. The fixed-sequence program begins in August and spans the course of eight continuous semesters. The projected enrollment is 36 students per annual cohort. As a rationale for the new program, the University cites Bureau of Labor Statistics projections of a 27% higher than average growth rate for occupational therapists from 2014 to 2024. The O.T.D. program was approved by the Wingate University Board of Trustees on January 26, 2017. A comprehensive list of all other programs offered by Wingate University was included, as well as a list of its approved off-campus instructional sites.

Admissions and graduation requirements were provided. The curriculum, course descriptions, and student learning outcomes were also provided along with a definition of credit hours. The O.T.D. program will be delivered through a combination of didactic and experiential learning opportunities, which will include supervised clinical fieldwork. Various tools will be used to assess student learning such as written assignments, projects, case studies, presentations, and clinical skill demonstrations. Prior to entering the Doctoral Experiential Component in the final semester, students must pass a clinical competency exam with a score of at least 80%. The program will be included in the University-wide institutional effectiveness process, which was described in detail. Academic oversight and supervision of the program will be provided by the Program Director, with support from the Vice Provost for Health Sciences.

The Faculty Roster describes the qualifications of the Program Director plus a second faculty member who is currently on board to support the Occupational Therapy program. Credential requirements and course assignments for the six future faculty members were also included, and appear appropriate. The current faculty members both have graduate degrees and extensive

professional experience related to their teaching responsibilities. The Program Director is a board certified and licensed occupational therapist. The faculty members both appear qualified to teach their assigned courses. Keep in mind that the ultimate determination of faculty qualifications is the responsibility of the peer review teams who will assess the faculty as part of the institution's next SACSCOC accreditation review.

Library and learning resources appear to be adequate for the program. The Ethel K. Smith Library and the Levine College of Health Sciences Biomedical Informatics Center on the University's main campus are both available to the O.T.D. students. The Library is a 40,000 square foot building that offers wireless internet access as well as 25 computers in the reference area and 12 computers in the library lab. This Library has an extensive collection of physical and online resources such as databases, journals, books, and periodicals that support the Occupational Therapy curriculum. The Biomedical Informatics Center, located within the Levine College of Health Sciences Building, contains more than 500 holdings related to drug and medical information. O.T.D. students will have access to all of these resources, plus additional external materials that are available through inter-library loan agreements.

Student support services appear to be adequate. Along with standard academic support services such as financial aid, student records, and admissions, additional support is provided to students through the Academic Resource Center. The Center provides disability services, resources for success, and a writing center. Students in the O.T.D. program will receive academic advising from core Occupational Therapy faculty and will have access to all campus services such as the health center, the bookstore, and the information technology department. They are also eligible to participate in a full range of student activities including student organizations and intramural sports. Orientation sessions are conducted prior to the beginning of the program to inform students of all the available services.

The Occupational Therapy program will be housed on the main campus of Wingate University in the Burnside Dalton Building. The assigned O.T.D. space will be comprised of at least three classrooms, six instructional laboratories, faculty offices, conference space, storage, and common areas for after-hours study. Classrooms will be equipped with projectors, desktop computers, and instructional technology appropriate for the content (such as a SmartBoard, Smart Podium, etc.). These spaces will also contain white boards, comfortable furniture, and adequate lighting. The physical resources appear to be adequate to support the program's educational goals.

SACS COC™

Financial support for the program appears to be adequate, and a detailed six-year budget was provided. Revenues are expected to exceed expenditures in the third year of the program's operation. The University also has a contingency plan to cover shortfalls in case student enrollment fails to meet the projected estimates. Wingate University accepts Title IV Funding and has had no restrictions placed upon the institution.

The Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges reviewed the materials seeking approval of the O.T.D. degree program in Occupational Therapy. It was the decision of the Board to approve the program and include it in the scope of the current accreditation.

Enclosed is an invoice for $500 to help defray the cost of review of the prospectus.

Sincerely,

Belle S. Wheelan

Belle S. Wheelan, Ph.D.
President

BSW/SKO:iy

Enclosure

Cc: Mr. Mitchell Cottenoir, Director of Institutional Effectiveness
Dr. Crystal A. Baird