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SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS
COMMISSION ON COLLEGES

June 4, 2021

Dr. T. Rhett Brown
President
Wingate University
315 E. Wilson Street
P.O. Box 159
Wingate, NC 28174

Dear Dr. Brown:

Thank you for submitting the following substantive change:

Substantive change:
Significant Departure Program
Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Public Health
Submission date:
12/11/2020
Intended Implementation date:
8/2/2021
Case ID:
SC012592

The Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree program in Public Health was deferred on April 13, 2021, with a request for an updated Faculty Roster Form with all courses in the new program (and any significant non-course program requirements such as thesis or research) assigned to at least one faculty member qualified to teach the course content. The institution responded on May 14, 2021. SACSCOC requested additional information via email. All of the institution's responses have been incorporated into the narrative below.

Wingate University proposes the implementation of the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree program in Public Health, effective August 2021. The program is anticipated to be ongoing, with an initial enrollment of five students. The program will be offered through face-to-face delivery on the main campus. The target audience will be local high school graduates and undergraduate Wingate University students who wish to major in public health. The institution noted that it will also offer a 4+1 B.S. in Public Health and M.S. in Public Health to eligible students if the proposed M.S. in Public Health is approved by SACSCOC.

The new program was described in the context of the institutional mission 'to develop educated, ethical, and productive global citizens' and appears to be appropriate and consistent. The need for the program was based on data from EAB, a consulting firm retained by the institution to evaluate supply and demand for the program. Data indicate student demand for the program is outpacing program growth, with only one program located in western North Carolina; the number of local and regional job postings in the field also suggests a strong level of employment possibilities. A 2019 survey conducted by Wingate University of its pre-nursing students indicated that 60% would consider public health if not accepted into nursing. The Wingate University Board of Trustees provided authority to offer the program on April 22, 2019. The

involvement of faculty and other appropriate groups in planning for and approving the change was documented through a detailed timeline describing the approval process.

The curriculum, projected schedule of course offerings, and course descriptions were provided and appear to be appropriate. The specific programmatic goals and student learning outcomes for the program were identified; program student learning outcomes will be assessed by quizzes and examinations, case study activities, technical and professional writings, group projects focused on related research and root cause analyses, multi-media portfolios, needs assessments, program development plans, and capstone presentations. The admission and graduation requirements for the pr ogram were provided and appear to be appropriate. The policy for defining and determining credit hours was provided. It appears to be appropriate and consistent with common academic practice. Administrative oversight for the program will be provided by the program director, who will report to the Provost. The program director was identified and appears to have adequate credentials for serving in this role.

A roster was provided detailing the credentials of faculty members assigned to teach in the program. The institution was asked to provide an updated roster Faculty Roster Form with all courses in the new program assigned to at least one faculty member qualified to teach the course content; additional information was also requested regarding the credentials of one faculty member. The requested information was provided, and the faculty members appear to have appropriate credentials for the courses assigned. The expected credentials and anticipated teaching assignments for the faculty members to be hired were also identified and appear to be appropriate. Keep in mind that the ultimate determination of faculty qualifications is the responsibility of the peer review team who will assess the program as part of the institution's next SACSCOC accreditation review. A description of the adequacy of the full-time faculty assigned to the program was provided and appears to be adequate.

The library and learning resources available to support the program were provided and appear to be appropriate. The program will be supported by the institution's Ethel K. Smith Library and the Levine College of Health Sciences Biomedical Information Center (BIC). The discipline-specific learning resources supporting the program were identified and include electronic newsletters, electronic textbooks, and databases such as *MICROMEDEX*, *Natural Medicines Comprehensive Database*, and *Clinical Pharmacology*. Discipline-specific refereed journals and primary source materials include the *American Journal of Public Health*, *Journal of Epidemiology and Public Health*, *Journal of Community Health*, *Public Health Reports*, and *Public Health Ethics.* The institution has agreements with multiple institutions to facilitate Interlibrary Loans and participates in reciprocal borrowing and lending agreements to expand resources for the program through the Charlotte Area Educational Consortia and the North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities. Students enrolled in the new program will access discipline-specific learning resources using the individual username and password assigned by the institution. Students and faculty members will access information electronically through the library's discovery service, Fetch!. Students are assisted in the use of online resources and onsite library resources through training provided in their first semester as an introduction to accessing online materials and through training later in their coursework to develop a more in-depth understanding of library resources. Faculty may request customized instruction for their courses. Reference services are available to faculty and

students; when the Reference Desk is not staffed, student messages are sent to professional librarians via a listserv for responses.

The support services for students in the program were described and appear to be sufficient. These services include academic advising, the Academic Resource Center, the Office of Information Technology and IT Help Desk, Health and Counseling Services, and public health student orientation.

The physical facilities and equipment available to support the program were described and appear to be adequate. The program will be housed in the Levine College of Health Sciences building. The resources supporting the program include faculty offices and IT workstations. Space may be shared with the nursing program and the Collaborative for the Common Good. It is not anticipated that sharing the space will impact programming in either of these areas. Equipment available to support the program includes projectors, desktop computers, instructional technology, and whiteboards.

A five-year budget was provided, and the institution appears to have adequate resources to support the program. Revenue will be generated by tuition; expenditures include faculty salaries, professional development, marketing, and accreditation fees. The institution affirmed that there are no resources going to institutions or organizations for contractual or support services for the new program. The institution appears to have adequate operational, management, and physical resources available to support the program. A contingency plan was provided in the event that the required resources do not materialize. The institution affirmed that it is not currently on reimbursement for Title IV funding.

The institutional assessment process was described and appears to be adequate. The process is led by the Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness. All academic programs are responsible for defining and measuring student learning outcomes that represent the discipline-specific knowledge, skills, and behaviors required of graduates. The Assessment Committee, which includes the Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness, Dean for General Education, faculty members, and nonacademic representatives, is responsible for examining the operational outcomes of the academic and administrative units and the program student learning outcomes and plans. The new program will be incorporated into the institution-wide review and assessment processes and will be required to provide operational and student learning outcomes findings, analysis, and action plans annually. The institution will also seek initial accreditation for the program from the Council of Education in Public Health (CEPH).

Reminder: Combined baccalaureate and master's degree programs –also known as 'accelerated' or '4+1' or '3+2' programs –are subject to requirements in Standard 9.2 of the *Principles of Accreditation*. The minimum hours required for each degree level are 120 semester credit hours at the baccalaureate level and 30 semester credit hours at the post-baccalaureate, graduate, or professional level. Thus, the institution is expected to require at least 150 semester credit hours to award a combined baccalaureate degree and master's degree. Creating such combined programs, if the component programs are already approved or are not significant departures from existing programs, is not a substantive change. However, if the institution requires fewer than 150 semester credit hours, the institution is in apparent non-compliance with Standard 9.2. The institution should be prepared to make an appropriate justification for all degree

programs and combined degree programs that include fewer than the required number of semester credit hours or its equivalent unit. The final determination of compliance with Standard 9.2 rests with peer review evaluators who will review the institution during its next accreditation review.

The Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges reviewed the materials seeking approval of the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree program in Public Health. 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 reviewing the prospectus.

Should you need assistance, please contact Dr. Crystal A. Baird at 404-679-4501 or via email at cbaird@sacscoc.org.

Please include the Case ID number above in all submissions or correspondence about this substantive change.

Note: The SACSCOC substantive change policy was revised in 2020. It includes many new requirements and changes to previous requirements. The Substantive Change Policy and Procedures and learning resources are available on the substantive change webpage at www.sacscoc.org.

Sincerely,

Belle S. Wheelan

Belle S. Wheelan, Ph.D.
President

BSW/TDB:lp

Enclosure (invoice with liaison's copy only)

cc: Dr. Eric Franklin Schneider, Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness
Dr. Crystal A. Baird