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SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS
COMMISSION ON COLLEGES

June 4, 2021

Dr. T. Rhett Brown
President
Wingate University
315 East 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
Master of Public Health (M.P.H.)
Submission date:
12/11/2020
Intended Implementation date:
8/2/2021
Case ID:
SC012682

The Master of Public Health (M.P.H.) degree program was deferred on April 13, 2021, for the inclusion of two courses on the Faculty Roster Form. The institution responded on May 6, 2021. SACSCOC requested additional information via phone and email. All institutional responses have been incorporated into the narrative below.

Wingate University proposes the implementation of the Master of Public Health (M.P.H.) degree program, effective August 2021. The program is anticipated to be ongoing with an initial enrollment of five students and will be offered through online delivery. The target audience will be Wingate University post-baccalaureate graduates, undergraduate students interested in the proposed 4+1 program, and Edward Via College of Medicine (VCOM) students. The institution is approved for distance education.

The new program was described in the context of the institutional mission 'to develop educated, ethical, and productive global citizens' and appears to be consistent and appropriate. The need for the program was based on data from EAB, a consulting firm retained by the institution to evaluate the supply and demand for the program, and on data from a Wingate University survey of the institution's student body. 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 the detailed timeline provided for the approval process of the program.

The curriculum, projected schedule of course offerings, and course descriptions were provided and appear to be appropriate. In addition to the traditional projected schedule of course offerings, the institution provided a plan of study to deliver the proposed program in a 4+1 format with the proposed Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree program in Public Health.

The specific programmatic goals and student learning outcomes for the program were identified and are intentionally identical to the competency standards of the Council on Education in Public Health, with five additional outcomes specific to the program's concentration in Health Education and Promotion. The program student learning outcomes will be assessed through assignments such as proposals, needs assessments, exams, discussion boards, case studies, proposals, and presentations. The admission and graduation requirements for the program 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.

The Faculty Roster Form was provided. The institution was asked to update the Faculty Roster Form to include two courses in the program that were not previously represented on the roster, to provide additional information regarding the credentials of one faculty member, and to clarify the expected credentials of the faculty member to be hired. The requested information was provided. The faculty members appear to have appropriate credentials to teach the courses assigned. 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. None of the current full- or part-time faculty positions at the institution will be eliminated or reduced to offer the new program.

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 include electronic newsletters, electronic textbooks, and databases such as *Facts and Comparisons eAnswers*, *LexiComp Online*, *Clinical Pharmacology*, and the *Johns Hopkins Guide*. Discipline-specific refereed journals and primary source materials include the *Annals of Tropical Medicine and Public Health*, *British Medical*

Journal, *Health Services Research*, *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 through the Charlotte Area Educational Consortia and North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities to expand resources for the program. Students enrolled in the new program will access discipline-specific learning resources through the username and password assigned to each individual by the institution. Students and faculty members will access information electronically through the library's discovery service, Fetch!. Students will be assisted in the use of online and onsite library resources through an introduction to accessing online materials provided in their first semester; they will also receive assistance later in their coursework to develop a more in-depth understanding of library resources. Faculty members are encouraged to 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 a response.

The support services for students in the program were described and appear to be sufficient. These services include faculty advisors, the Office of Information Technology and IT Help Desk, Financial Aid, the Wingate Outfitters bookstore, and the Academic Resource Center that includes Disability Services, Resources for Success, and the Writing Center.

The physical facilities and equipment available to support the program were described and appear to be adequate. The program will be administratively housed in the Levine College of Health Sciences building and delivered through distance education. The resources supporting the program include faculty offices and 4-6 IT workstations. The infrastructure to support program delivery by distance education includes the use of the Canvas learning management system, Zoom licenses, faculty training through the Instructional Technology and Design consultant, assistance from the staff of the Ethel K. Smith Library, technical support for students, faculty, and staff from Instructure (the Canvas developer), the institution's Information Technology department and IT Helpdesk, and the Chief Learning Officer and appropriate staff members.

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. Expenditures are expected to exceed revenue for the first two years of the program's operation. The institution affirmed that the program will be supported through internal funding during this time. A contingency plan was provided in the event that the required resources do not materialize. 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. 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.

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 Master of Public Health (M.P.H.) degree program. 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: Eric Franklin Schneider, Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness
Dr. Crystal A. Baird