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August 18, 2023

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

Dear Dr. Brown:

Thank you for submitting the following substantive change:

Substantive change:
New Program-Approval
Master of Social Work (MSW)
Submission date:
4/18/2023
Intended Implementation date:
8/1/2024
Case ID:
SC021633

Wingate University requests approval to offer the Master of Social Work (MSW).

Additional information was requested on July 26, 2023, from the institution; the institution's response has been added to the originally submitted material.

The MSW program will be delivered through asynchronous online methods. Faculty and students will utilize Canvas, Wingate University's Learning Management System, to provide the framework for course delivery. The proposed program will utilize a cohort model and projected enrollment of 15 students. As the program grows, the University projects an annual incoming cohort size of 30 students. The MSW program will be an ongoing, permanent degree program with no predetermined end date. Wingate's baccalaureate programs in Human Services, Psychology, and Sociology will provide a pipeline of prospective students into the MSW program.

Wingate University has established multiple health-related professional programs over the past fifteen years that have become well-respected within the region and state. The development of each of these programs has provided Wingate University with the knowledge and expertise necessary to develop the proposed Master of Social Work (MSW) program in the College of Health Sciences. Wingate operates with an emphasis on service in the community through programs such as in Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, Physician Assistant Studies, and Public Health. The University provides a strong core curriculum, which develops analytical abilities, awareness of cultural heritage, and understanding of life's major ethical issues. The offering of an MSW program affirms the University's commitment to the development of educated, ethical, and productive global citizens, which aligns with the University's mission.

The University reviewed data and information to analyze the local, regional, and national level need for the MSW program at Wingate University. The University began by looking at complementary programs that would align with the current programs focused on health science professions. With existing programs, Wingate is well-positioned to engage with area providers, practitioners, community agencies, and non-profits to determine basic needs. Community partners and agencies identified a need in social work to expand into the broader area of Behavioral Health. Faculty were involved with the curriculum development of the MSW utilizing the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accrediting standards. The program was approved by Wingate Graduate Affairs in March 2023 and reported to Faculty Senate on April 12, 2023. The minutes were included with the proposal.

The University reports the WU Board of Trustees (BOT) has full authority to manage the affairs of the Corporation. Therefore, the Wingate University Board of Trustees approval is required to add any program to the University's academic offerings. The MSW program was presented to the Mission and Purpose Committee, Executive Committee, and Board of Trustees. The new program received approval from each of the committees. A letter from the chair of the BOT is provided with the proposal.

The program will prepare students to work as advanced, generalist social workers and will provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary for licensure. Through the program, students will be prepared to enter the workforce with advanced skills beyond those of a generalist entry-level practitioner. The mission of the Master of Social Work Program at Wingate University is to develop knowledgeable and ethical social workers who are committed to the professional core values of service, integrity, social justice, competence, dignity and worth of the human being, and the importance of human relationships.

The University identified nine student learning outcomes (SLO) for the MSW Program which align with the CSWE competencies and behaviors. Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) will be measured via final practicum evaluations and embedded measures. Upon the start of the first cohort of students, the MSW Program/Department will be incorporated into the ongoing annual assessment procedures on campus and will be required to provide operational and student learning outcomes findings, analysis, and action plans on an annual basis. The initial accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and subsequent reaffirmation will serve as the program's review.

The MSW Program Director is responsible for oversight of the MSW program including planning, evaluation, budgeting, selection of faculty and staff, maintenance of specialty accreditation, and commitment to strategies for professional development. In turn, the Provost is responsible for the supervision and oversight of the MSW Program Director.

Admission to the MSW program includes possession of a bachelor's degree or higher from an accredited institution, a cumulative GPA indicative of success in graduate school, generally 3.0 or greater on a 4.0 scale, and completion of a personal statement, indicating an understanding of social work values and personal intention for enrolling in the program. Graduation

requirements include completion of the proposed 48 credit hours (24 credit hours for Advanced Standing Students) and a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0.

WU demonstrates compliance with Standard 10.7 of the *Principles of Accreditation*. The University uses the Carnegie Unit as a unit of measurement. Wingate University uses this unit in defining a semester hour of credit as equivalent to a minimum of three hours of class per week for a 15-week semester.

The University provided the curriculum program of study, course descriptions, and a projected schedule of course offerings. WU provided the qualifications for one currently employed full-time faculty, three full-time to-be-hired faculty, and one director who will teach in the new program. 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 reaffirmation.

The program will begin with at least two full-time faculty members, including the director, and will increase to at least four full-time faculty members by the initial CSWE accreditation in 2027. The program director has assigned teaching loads to the present curriculum, and it was determined that the curriculum can be delivered adequately by four full-time core faculty members, while also providing ample time to each faculty member to engage in scholarship, service, and student advising activities. Each faculty member will be responsible for teaching 6-9 credits per semester which are in keeping with university expectations. Currently, the director is the only hired faculty member as part of the upcoming MSW Program. The University provided a narrative and a list of research and scholarship capacity and experience in directing student research. The job description for the next faculty member, forecasted to be hired by January 2024, is also included with this document as evidence of the expectations for scholarly work. The director's focused scholarship/research agenda included macro social work, focusing on the following three areas: cultural and global diversity, program development, and assessment. The record of publications, conference presentations, and external funding.

In alignment with CSWE standards, all faculty members teaching social work practice courses must demonstrate that they possess the expertise necessary to ensure the appropriate content delivery, including, at minimum, an MSW from a CSWE-accredited institution and two years post-MSW experience. Individual expectations for scholarship and service (to the University and community) will be set based on each faculty member's role within the program. Each primary faculty member will be engaged and actively pursue a scholarly agenda that fits the school, program, professional development plan, and assigned role. These expectations will be monitored by the Program Director (in conjunction with the Provost) in the annual appraisal and adjusted during workload distribution as necessary. The University asserts none of the current full-time or part-time faculty positions at Wingate University will be eliminated or reduced to offer the MSW program. All core faculty will be dedicated exclusively to the program and hired for the MSW program only.

The Ethel K. Smith (EKS) Library on the Wingate Campus maintains collections to support the learning experiences of the students and the teaching and research activities of the faculty and

staff of Wingate University. Students and faculty of the proposed MSW program will have full access to the library. The EKS Library has been intentionally moving towards virtual access to all books, journals, and other reference materials and is well-suited to accommodate the needs of students in the online MSW Program.

The EKS Library provides access to several online research databases with 24-hour access available. These include discipline-specific databases in behavioral health disciplines, including APA PsycArticles, ProQuest Central, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global, Psychology Databases, Research Library, SAGE Journals, Social Sciences Index, Sociology Databases, and Wiley Online. WU houses full-text electronic subscriptions to predominant peer-refereed journals of relevance to social work including Social Work, Social Work Research, Health and Social Work Child, and Family Social Work.

Students and faculty will receive a valid Wingate University network username/password which will provide them access to the EKS Library. The EKS Library's discovery service, Fetch!, allows patrons to search all holdings, print, media, databases, electronic materials, etc. in one search. To further facilitate convenient, user-friendly access to Library resources, the EKS Library subscribes to Springshare's LibGuides. A Librarian in consultation with program faculty will create a guide for the MSW program. Students will receive an introduction to the EKS library during their orientation including how to access online materials.

The EKS Library Reference Department's primary purpose is to serve the information needs of the students, faculty, and staff of Wingate University and is accessible both online and in person. As a subset of the Reference Department, the Instruction Department provides online access to all search possibilities within a given discipline. Faculty arrange customized instruction for classes. For the MSW Program, instruction will be in the form of a video recording that to be shared during orientation and on the home page of each online course.

Wingate University provides a host of student support services to support the academic and professional development of professional students including graduate student involvement and the Writing Center.

Faculty and staff offices in the MSW program will be located on the main campus of Wingate. The MSW will have adequate space on campus for offices and access to a variety of physical resources including conference rooms, events centers, offices, and reception areas. The MSW Program is well-resourced to provide online instruction. Canvas, the Learning Management System, is conducive to online education. Wingate University will also provide ample technology to faculty and staff in the MSW Program, including computers, video conferencing, monitors, and speakers as well as online technical support for faculty, staff, and students.

Financial resources appear to be adequate to support the new program. The MSW program will require funds and resources to be allocated including personnel salary and benefits, faculty travel and professional development, accreditation expenses, supplies, computing, and software, field and practicum funds; and student recruiting, WU provided a budget for the initial five years of the Master of Social Work program.

The University states the small number of required resources needed to fully fund the program without incurring debt are available and ready. A contingency plan in case resources do not materialize as expected, includes the suspension of the program at the point of any inability to provide a quality program and the disbursement of matriculated students to other CSWE-accredited MSW programs across the United States on a case-by-case basis.

The Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges reviewed the materials seeking approval of the Master of Social Work (MSW). It was the decision of the Board to approve the program and include it in the scope of accreditation.

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

Should you need assistance, please contact Dr. Denise Y. Young at (404) 492-5386 or via email at dyoung@sacscoc.org.

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

Sincerely,

Belle S. Wheelan

Belle S. Wheelan, Ph.D.
President

BSW/DDG:lp

Enclosure (invoice with liaison's copy only)

cc: Dr. Eric F. Schneider, Vice Provost for Institutional Effectiveness, Wingate University
Dr. Denise Y. Young, Vice President, SACSCOC