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SOUTH CAROLINA COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. R. Austin Gilbert, Jr., Chairman, and Members,
Commission on Higher Education

From: Ms. Dianne Chinnes, Chairman, *DC/gmm*
Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

Consideration of Request for Initial License
ECPI College of Technology, Virginia Beach, Virginia
A.A.S. in Computer and Information Science
A.A.S. in Computer Electronics Technology

Summary

ECPI College of Technology requests approval of an initial license to offer in Greenville two programs leading to the A.A.S. degree in Computer and Information Science with five concentrations and in Computer Electronics with two concentrations.

ECPI College of Technology was founded in the Commonwealth of Virginia in February 1966. It is a private for-profit institution. The acronym ECPI stands for electronics, communications, programming and information systems. In addition to its main campus in Virginia Beach, it operates in Hampton, Virginia, and in Greensboro and Charlotte, North Carolina. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools has accredited ECPI College of Technology since January 1998, and a Board of Trustees governs the institution.

The Commission has delegated to the licensing staff authority to approve requests for the initial Licenses and renewals for institutions that offer only diploma and certificate programs. Since ECPI offers diploma programs in addition to degree programs, the staff

is including information about the diploma programs with this proposal. ECPI offers diploma programs in Accounting Systems Administration, Computer Programming, Computer Technology, and Medical Systems Administration. Each diploma program includes from 39 to 41 semester credit hours that students complete in a minimum of 40 weeks. Each diploma program includes a course in English, math, and social or behavioral science. The staff has approved these diploma programs.

The degree curricula focus on technology and include mathematics, reading, writing, and oral communications. Each degree program for which ECPI seeks licensure includes 64 semester credit hours. The minimum time to complete a program is 65 weeks (16-17 months); an academic year (two semesters) is 30 weeks. All of the courses will be traditionally delivered. Approximately 70 percent of students who enroll at the other ECPI campuses graduate; ECPI expects to attain this high completion rate at its Greenville branch. Each degree program with its objectives and admission requirements is shown in the following table:

Major	Concentration	Objectives	Admission Criteria	
			Required	Recommended
Computer & Information Science	Information Technology/Computer Programming	Application software and operating systems, hardware and software problem-solving, programming languages	HS/GED. Pass timed manual admit test.	Be able to work under stress. Previous college/ work experience.
Computer & Information Science	Information Technology/Networking	Client and server based network operating systems (LAN and WAN); plan, install, and maintain e-mail servers; plan, install, and post web-based products on web servers; familiarization with planning, open-ended design, maintenance, and upgrade of data network infrastructures		
Computer & Information Science	Computer Systems Applications	Software applications including word processing, database, spreadsheets, and presentation graphics including PowerPoint; research using electronic media; desktop publishing; web-page creation; hardware and software installation, maintenance, and trouble shooting	HS/GED. Pass admit test. Keyboarding.	
Computer & Information Science	Medical Systems Administration	Medical terminology, insurance and coding, transcription, accounting, and office procedures; microcomputer software, keyboarding		
Computer & Information Science	Accounting Systems Administration	Accounting practices, payroll, keyboarding, computerized accounting software	HS/GED. Pass admit test.	Be able to work under stress. Keyboarding.
Computer Electronics Technology	Computer Technology	Analog and digital electronics, test equipment, trouble shooting analog and digital electronic equipment	HS/GED. Pass admit test.	40-lb. lifting ability.
Computer Electronics Technology	Telecommunications Technology	Analog and digital electronics, telecommunications systems, test equipment, trouble shooting skills; computer communications and networks, fiber optics		

The institution provides student support services in financial aid, placement assistance, and academic advising. Faculty credentials, academic policies and procedures

technical colleges the right to offer the AA/AS at all sixteen technical colleges, appear to have been realized conclusively. The AA/AS programs are providing significantly increased access to pre-baccalaureate transfer programs for growing numbers of South Carolinians who had been historically excluded from higher education careers.

The importance of the engineering technology programs to the State's goals for economic development and for increasing family incomes strongly suggests that a comprehensive statewide plan should be developed and implemented so that these programs begin to enroll significantly increased numbers of qualified students who are retained to graduation and who are capable of pursuing baccalaureate programs in engineering, engineering technologies, or business-related applications of these programs. Distance education should be employed to provide coursework which might otherwise be too expensive to supply on site. Women, minorities, and the college-preparatory graduates of high schools should especially be targeted in this plan as potential engineering technology students.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends to the Commission the acceptance of this report's designation of programs for the current reporting year (Tables 1,2, 3, and 4).

The Committee further suggests that the technical college system and its constituent colleges develop and implement a multi-year marketing and recruitment plan to identify talented college-preparatory students and others, especially targeting women and minorities, in order to increase significantly the enrollment in and graduation from programs in the engineering technologies.

The Committee further suggests that those senior colleges with appropriate career-ladder programs (e.g., South Carolina State University with its B.S. in Engineering Technology; USC-Spartanburg with its B.S. in the Management of Technology) offer these programs on a wider geographical basis, including distance education, to meet the need for "laddered progression" for students entering and graduating from associate degree programs in engineering technology and other technologies.

/jb