



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/gmc*
Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

Consideration of
Addition of New Specialized Accreditation Agencies

Background

Under the guidelines which the Commission has developed for the consideration of the addition of new specialized accreditation agencies, two institutional requests were received by the deadline for this period. These requests sought, respectively, to add:

- ♦ Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (Joint Review Committee-Athletic Training). [CAHEEP (JRC-AT)]. Request made by College of Charleston.
- ♦ Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). Request made by USC-Columbia.

A request for comment was sent to all public institutions. Under the guidelines, those comments were to have been submitted on or before October 1, 1999, for consideration at the October meeting of the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP).

Institutional Responses on the CAHEEP (JRC-AT) Request

Two institutions (USC-Columbia and Lander University) responded to the CAHEEP (JRC-AT) request. Both indicated support for the request to add this agency to the Commission's list of approved accrediting agencies.

Institutional Responses on the CCNE Request

The CCNE has not yet been accepted as an approved accrediting agency by either the Commission on Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or the United States Department of Education at this time. However, the CCNE's web page states that the organization anticipates USDE approval by the end of 1999.

Three institutional responses were received concerning the request to add the CCNE. These responses came from USC-Aiken, Clemson University, and the Medical University of South Carolina. CCNE will accredit only baccalaureate and graduate programs in nursing, whereas NLNAC (the National League for Nursing's Accrediting Commission) approves associate degrees in nursing leading to the RN, baccalaureate degrees leading to the RN, and masters-level degrees in nursing. Some institutional responses noted that the approval of the CCNE would divide nursing accreditation for academic programs of first-time Registered Nurse licensures into CCNE and NLNAC. None of the institutional responses to the CCNE request was negative, as long as it is clear that only one accreditation is required by South Carolina. In addition, since the State Board for Nursing requires that programs be approved by it before graduates are approved to take the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX), it is important that CCNE accreditation receive prior endorsement by the State Board's approval process. State Board's staff has indicated orally to CHE staff that no negative effect will occur from a change at eligible institutions from NLNAC to CCNE accreditation.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that the Commission approve both the CAHEEP (JRC-AT) and the CCNE for inclusion on the list of approved accrediting agencies, provided that the U.S. Department of Education has placed the CCNE on its list of approved accrediting agencies by the end of 1999, and that written assurance from the State Board of Nursing is provided to the effect that accreditation by CCNE is acceptable for the State Board's approval of program graduates to take the NCLEX.

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