



**Commission on
Higher Education**

CHE
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Rayburn Barton
Executive Director

November 1, 2001

MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. Dalton B. Floyd, Jr., Chairman, and Members, Commission on Higher Education

From: Ms. Dianne Chinnes, Chairman, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing *DChinnes*

**Consideration of Revision to Guidelines for New Academic Program Approval:
Memorandum of Understanding for Collaborative Programs**

Background

At its meeting in July, the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs approved a new policy statement to be added to the *Guidelines for New Academic Program Approval*. We need to clarify for faculty developing joint or collaborative programs that a Memorandum of Understanding needs to be developed and submitted concurrently with the program proposal for approval by the participating institutions. The Commission would subsequently review and approve the proposal simultaneously with the Memorandum.

Typically staff requests submission of such a Memorandum during the program approval process. However, our policies do not provide notice that such a document will be requested and thus the development of such a document may be initiated late in the program approval process and potentially delay program approval at either the institutional or CHE levels. We have had at least one instance where a collaborative program was approved by both campuses internally and by CHE subsequently, pending development of the Memorandum. However, agreement was ultimately never reached on the Memorandum, so the program was never implemented.

It would seem prudent to avoid such an investment of time by so many people by stipulating in policy that the Memorandum of Agreement is required to be approved internally with the final proposal and submitted to the Commission,

signed by the appropriate parties, with the final proposal. I think this will avoid delays in either the institutional or CHE approval processes and ensure that no one invests time prematurely in a program that ultimately will not be implemented because the critical collaborative details are not agreed to. And, finally, it is essential that the appropriate administrative authorities approve the specific collaborative operational procedures prior to submission of the final program proposal to the Commission.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that the Commission approve the addition of the following as Policy # 21, with the current Policy # 21 becoming # 22:

For joint or collaborative programs, a Memorandum of Understanding that clearly delineates program responsibilities and fiscal arrangements among all participants must be developed and approved concurrently with the program proposal at the institutional level; the Memorandum of Understanding, signed by the appropriate senior-level institutional officers, must be submitted with the final program proposal when the program proposal is submitted to CHE for approval.