



**Graduate Executive Committee
October 9, 2015
Minutes**

Attendees: Don Klingner, Craig Elder, Chris Nelson, Wangyun Chao, Anna Kosloski, Crista Hill, Leslie Grant, Sandy Berry-Lowe, Jeff Spicher, Melissa Benton, Karen Livesey, Cathy Claiborne, Whitney Porter, Becky Gundrum, Jose Mora, Ron Koch, Eddie Portillos, Charles Benight, Sylvia Martinez, Charlie Wang, Kelli Klebe, KrisAnn McBroom

Business

- Nursing credit change to nursing option (presented by Melissa Benton): Nursing has requested a change in the core curriculum for the Master of Science in Nursing. Currently a student has an option of a research analysis course and written comprehensive exam (3 credits) or a thesis (5 credits). The change would be to increase the research analysis course and written examination to (4 credits). This will allow for a stronger research course and also less of a differentiation between the two options for students. This course change would go in to effect Fall 2016.

Action: GEC unanimously voted to recommend approval of the change to the Master of Science in Nursing.

- Graduate Enrollments: Dean Klebe gave an overview of the current status of graduate enrollments. Enrollments for graduate students are down this semester while enrollment at UCCS are up. The Graduate School will be calling admitted students for Spring 2016 to encourage them to enroll for the upcoming term.
- Graduate Faculty Appointment: There are new requirements from the Higher Learning Commission (see attachments): The Graduate School must now adhere to stricter standards of who can be appointed as graduate faculty. A new form (attached) was discussed and approved to help in this process. Programs will be required to demonstrate an instructor has adequate education or professional experience to teach any graduate level courses or be involved in graduate student research. Typically it is expected that the faculty has the degree in the field; has a degree that is a level higher than the course being taught; and for PhD programs, that the person is active in research. There are exceptions for other highly qualified candidates and programs will need to write a letter outlining those requirements and submit with the form.

Action: The Graduate School will make the form electronic.

- Probation: removing a student from probation using CU Boulder and Denver courses (See suggested changes to current policy below): The committee discussed only using UCCS courses to add or remove someone from probationary status. The committee had some concerns around not allowing CU Boulder and Denver courses to be used.

Current Policy and Suggested Changes on Probation and Dismissal

- *Academic Probation:* A student who has completed 9 or more semester hours at UCCS in the Graduate School and whose graduate program grade point average falls below 3.00 will be placed on academic probation until such time as the UCCS graduate program grade point average is raised to 3.00 or higher. Courses taken at other institutions, including other CU campuses will not be included as part of the decision to place or remove a student from probation. The student will have a maximum of one calendar year to be removed from probation, or the student may be dismissed from the Graduate School.
- *Action:* The graduate school will determine what CU Denver and Boulder have as their policies and determine if there are any legal issues around using or not using CU system courses. The graduate school will bring this back to the committee at a future meeting.
- Out of state recruitment scholarship: The committee discussed the best way to give out these scholarships. For

many programs it was not used as recruitment last year. Programs feel the method of distribution was good and will work more effectively now that they have done it for one year. It was suggested that this next year will be run the same way, with minor modifications to the rules. Some members of the GEC wanted a lower GPA requirement.

- Western Region Graduate Program (WRGP): We currently have 8 programs involved in this. The application process is coming up. The application is due November 20th 2015 (you can find information and forms at www.wiche.edu/wrgp). There is a push for programs related to health. Programs should think about whether they want their programs involved.

Action: Dean Klebe will work with administration to see if they will allow any new programs to apply. You must have campus approval to apply, which we do not currently have, but you should be aware of this deadline in case permission is given. Let me know if you are interested.

- Last courses taken at UCCS for degree (percentage of courses): It was discussed whether UCCS should have a policy around percentage of final courses needed to be taken at UCCS (e.g., undergraduates require the last 30% of coursework needs to be completed at UCCS). The directors expressed concern that this may be difficult for our military students and their families. They would like the flexibility to allow students to take courses elsewhere when needed. This will not be pursued at this time.
- Potential conflicts of interest for employees who are students: There are situations at UCCS where a staff member is also a student in a graduate program. Depending on the person's role on staff this might create a conflict of interest (e.g., a student in a program in which they also work gives them access to other student's records). The Graduate School would like to create a policy around conflict of interest. The directors believe this is an important topic and questioned whether it should be a more full campus policy rather than a graduate school policy.

Action: The graduate school will work with the campus to determine who should develop such a policy. If the graduate school is appropriate starting place, we will bring forward a draft policy at a future meeting.

- The final GEC meeting is changed to May 6, 2016 due to conflict with commencement on second Friday of the month.

Announcements

Fall 2015 GEC Meetings (10:00-11:30; All Fall meetings are in UC 124): Nov 13, Dec 11

Spring 2016 GEC Meeting (10:00-11:30): Feb 12 (UC 124), Mar 11 (Dwire 204), April 8 (Dwire 204), May 6 (TBA)

Graduate Nursing Program

Proposed Curriculum Revisions (Anticipated implementation fall 2016):

MSN – Adult/Gero Primary Care Nursing Practitioner Option

MSN Core Courses	Credits
NURS 6100 Philosophical Foundations in Nursing Practice**	3
NURS 6110 Advanced Nursing Practice and Health Care Policy**	3
NURS 6120 Nursing Research**	3
NURS 6280 Clinical Pharmacotherapeutics	3
NURS 6730 Advanced Health Assessment	3
NURS 6740 Advanced Pathophysiology	3
NURS 7024 Research Analysis and Application (4) AND Written Comprehensive Exam OR NURS 7000 Thesis** (5)	4-5
TOTAL MSN CORE CREDITS	22-23
Adult/Gero Specialty Courses	
NURS 6910 Primary Care of Acute Health Conditions**	6
NURS 6920 Primary Care of Chronic Health Conditions**	6
NURS 6930 Foundational Principles of Care of Older Adults	2
NURS 6940 Geriatric Clinical Syndromes	4
NURS 6980 Synthesis Practicum	8
TOTAL ADULT/GERO NP SPECIALTY CREDITS	26

**Inconsistent with catalog name

MSN – Family Primary Care Nursing Practitioner Option

MSN Core Courses		Credits
NURS 6100 Philosophical Foundations in Nursing Practice**		3
NURS 6110 Advanced Nursing Practice and Health Care Policy**		3
NURS 6120 Nursing Research**		3
NURS 6280 Clinical Pharmacotherapeutics		3
NURS 6730 Advanced Health Assessment		3
NURS 6740 Advanced Pathophysiology		3
NURS 7024 Research Analysis and Application (4) AND Written Comprehensive Exam OR NURS 7000 Thesis** (5)		4-5
TOTAL MSN CORE CREDITS		22-23
Family Specialty Courses		
NURS 6900 Primary Care of Pediatric Patients**		5
NURS 6910 Primary Care of Acute Health Conditions**		6
NURS 6920 Primary Care of Chronic Health Conditions**		6
NURS 6980 Synthesis Practicum		8
TOTAL FAMILY NP SPECIALTY CREDITS		25

**Inconsistent with catalog name

MSN – Nursing Education Option

MSN Core Courses	Credits
NURS 6100 Philosophical Foundations in Nursing Practice**	3
NURS 6110 Advanced Nursing Practice and Health Care Policy**	3
NURS 6120 Nursing Research**	3
NURS 6730 Advanced Health Assessment	3
NURS 6740 Advanced Pathophysiology	3
NURS 6280 Clinical Pharmacotherapeutics	3
NURS 7024 Research Analysis and Application (4) AND Written Comprehensive Exam OR NURS 7000 Thesis** (5)	4-5
TOTAL MSN CORE CREDITS	22-23
Nursing Education Specialty Courses	
NURS 6180 Technology for Teaching	3
NURS 6190 Measurement and Evaluation**	3
NURS 6200 Curriculum Development**	3
NURS 6210 Transformational Teaching Strategies	3
NURS 6225 Roles of the Nurse Educator (not in course catalog)	3
NURS 7720 Education Practicum**	5
TOTAL NURSING EDUCATION SPECIALTY CREDITS	20

**Inconsistent with catalog name

**UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO AT COLORADO SPRINGS
HELEN AND ARTHUR E. JOHNSON BETH-EL COLLEGE OF
NURSING & HEALTH SCIENCES
COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO
SYLLABUS**

COURSE TITLE: NURS 7024 RESEARCH ANALYSIS AND APPLICATION

PREREQUISITES: NURS 6100, NURS 6110, NURS 6120, NURS 6280, NURS 6730, NURS 6740, and a minimum of 3 additional credit hours in the MSN program with a grade of B or higher.

SEMESTER OFFERED: Fall 2016

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Provides the skills and knowledge to analyze and synthesize research evidence in a selected area of practice. Promotes clinical leadership by integrating theory, research, and practice into a scholarly proposal for practice change to ensure safe and effective care.

CREDIT HOURS: 4

OBJECTIVES:

1. Critically analyze and synthesize research evidence in a selected advanced nursing practice area.
2. Apply theory within a research utilization model to identify cost-effective interventions and appropriate evaluation strategies.
3. Identify organizational implications and educational needs related to the implementation of evidence in a selected practice area.
4. Analyze cultural and ethical implications for care of an identified population

Determining Qualified Faculty through HLC's Criteria for Accreditation and Assumed Practices

Guidelines for Institutions and Peer Reviewers

These guidelines were updated October 1, 2015, due to the adoption of a policy revision to Assumed Practice B.2. by HLC's Board of Trustees on June 26, 2015. This revision clarified HLC's longstanding expectations regarding the qualifications of faculty and the importance of faculty members having appropriate expertise in the subjects they teach.

Introduction

The following information provides guidance to institutions and peer reviewers in determining and evaluating minimal faculty qualifications at institutions accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC). These guidelines serve to amplify the Criteria for Accreditation and Assumed Practices that speak to the importance of institutions employing qualified faculty for the varied and essential roles faculty members perform. HLC's requirements related to qualified faculty seek to ensure that students have access to faculty members who are experts in the subject matter they teach and who can communicate knowledge in that subject to their students. A qualified faculty member helps position students for success not only in a particular class, but in their academic programs and their careers after they have completed their program.

The following guidelines apply to all faculty members whose primary responsibility is teaching, including part-time, adjunct, dual credit, temporary and/or non-tenure-track faculty. Although some institutions place a heavy reliance on adjunct faculty, or give graduate teaching

assistants the responsibility for instruction in many course sections, an institution committed to effective teaching and learning will be able to demonstrate consistent procedures and careful consideration of qualifications for all instructional faculty.

Background on HLC's Qualified Faculty Requirements

During 2010-2011, HLC began developing new Criteria for Accreditation and Assumed Practices. Together, the Criteria for Accreditation and the Assumed Practices, both of which became effective in January 2013, define the quality standards that all member institutions must satisfy to achieve and maintain HLC accreditation.

In June 2015, HLC revised Assumed Practice B.2. to elevate academic quality by ensuring that faculty members who deliver college content are appropriately qualified to do so and to clarify HLC's expectations. Also, the revisions to Assumed Practice B.2. reflected longstanding HLC expectations that had appeared in various written forms in previous years. Through this revision process, HLC supports its mission of assuring and advancing the quality of higher learning.

When HLC's Board of Trustees approved the revisions to Assumed Practice B.2. in June 2015, it also extended the date of compliance to September 1, 2017, to allow institutions time to work through the details of the revised requirement. With these guidelines, HLC seeks to convey

both its expectations and timeline for compliance, along with strategies for institutional success in the best interest of key stakeholders, including students, parents, employers and other institutions of higher education.

Relevant Criteria and Assumed Practices

Criterion Three speaks to faculty qualifications, specifically Core Component 3.C, subcomponents 3.C.1., 3.C.2., and 3.C.4. Assumed Practice B.2.a. and B.2.b. are central to this topic and are presented below in revised form in accordance with the effective date of September 1, 2017.

Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

The institution provides high quality education, wherever and however its offerings are delivered.

Core Component 3.C. The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

3.C.1. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.

3.C.2. All instructors are appropriately qualified, including those in dual credit, contractual, and consortial programs.

3.C.4. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.

Assumed Practice B. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support

[Revised as written for the September 1, 2017 effective date.]

B.2. Faculty Roles and Qualifications

- a. Qualified faculty members are identified primarily by credentials, but other factors, including but not limited to equivalent experience, may be considered by the

institution in determining whether a faculty member is qualified. Instructors (excluding for this requirement teaching assistants enrolled in a graduate program and supervised by faculty) possess an academic degree relevant to what they are teaching and at least one level above the level at which they teach, except in programs for terminal degrees or when equivalent experience is established. In terminal degree programs, faculty members possess the same level of degree. When faculty members are employed based on equivalent experience, the institution defines a minimum threshold of experience and an evaluation process that is used in the appointment process. Faculty teaching general education courses, or other non-occupational courses, hold a master's degree or higher in the discipline or subfield. If a faculty member holds a master's degree or higher in a discipline or subfield other than that in which he or she is teaching, that faculty member should have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or subfield in which they teach.

- b. Instructors teaching in graduate programs should hold the terminal degree determined by the discipline and have a record of research, scholarship or achievement appropriate for the graduate program.

The Importance of Qualified Faculty

Within a specific discipline or field of study in a collegiate environment, “the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services,” as stated in Core Component 3.C., refers to a faculty member’s ability to understand and convey the essentials of the discipline that a student should master at various course and program levels. Beyond mere coverage of course material, qualified faculty should be able to engage professionally with colleagues in determining the learning objectives for all graduates of a program, as well as possess and demonstrate the full scope of knowledge, skills and dispositions appropriate to the credential awarded. More broadly, qualified faculty should know the learning objectives of the institution for all of its students. HLC expects that through the higher education curricula and learning contexts that faculty develop, the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application, and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs. Qualified faculty should also be aware of whether and how much students learn through the ongoing collection and analysis

of appropriate data, because an institution should be able to demonstrate its commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning. It is important to note that none of these abilities are intended to substitute for content expertise or tested experience.

Note: See HLC's Criteria 3 and 4 (specifically 3.B. and 4.B.) for more information on expectations regarding teaching and learning.

Quality Assurance Expectations in Determining Minimally Qualified Faculty

HLC expects that credentials will be the primary mechanism used by institutions to ascertain minimal faculty qualifications. Yet HLC recognizes that *experience* may be considered in determining faculty qualifications, as overviewed on page four.

Using Credentials as a Basis for Determining Minimally Qualified Faculty

Faculty credentials generally refer to the degrees faculty have earned that establish their credibility as scholars and their competence in the classroom. Common expectations for faculty credentials within the higher education community include the following.

- Faculty teaching in higher education institutions should have completed a program of study in the discipline or subfield in which they teach, and/or for

which they develop curricula, with coursework at least one level above that of the courses being taught or developed. Successful completion of a coherent degree in a specific field enhances an instructor's depth of subject matter knowledge.

- Faculty teaching in undergraduate programs should hold a degree at least one level above that of the program in which they are teaching. Those faculty members teaching general education courses, or other non-occupational courses (i.e., courses not designed to prepare people directly for a career), hold a master's degree or higher in the discipline or subfield. If a faculty member holds a master's degree or higher in a discipline or subfield other than that in which he or she is teaching, that faculty member should have completed a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the discipline or subfield in which they teach.
- Faculty teaching in career and technical education college-level certificate and associate's degree programs should hold a bachelor's degree in the field and/or a combination of education, training and tested experience. (Note: See *Tested Experience* section on page four.)
- Faculty teaching in graduate programs should hold the terminal degree determined by the discipline and have a record of research, scholarship or achievement appropriate for the graduate program.
- Faculty guiding doctoral education should have a record of scholarship and preparation to teach at the doctoral level. Research and scholarship should be appropriate to the program and degree offered.

What is an Academic Subfield?

An academic *subfield* refers to components of the discipline in which the instruction is delivered. The focus, in this instance, is on the courses being taught and the appropriateness of faculty qualifications with reference to such courses. The underlying issue is whether a degree in the field or a focus in the specialization held by a faculty member appropriately matches, in accordance with the conventions of the academic field, the courses the faculty member would teach.

Examples:

In political science, the subfields include American politics, comparative politics, international relations, and so forth. The most basic introductory course is in the subfield of American politics, often called Introduction to American Politics,

American National Government or American Politics. The instructor teaching this course would be expected to meet the qualifications for American politics.

In history, the two main subfields at the introductory level include American history and world civilization, again titled variously. The expectation is that the faculty will be qualified appropriately depending on whether the courses they teach are in American history or world civilization.

In business, the subfields include management, marketing, accounting, and finance. The introductory courses are often within these subfields, such as Principles of Accounting (frequently I and II), Principles of Marketing, and such. The faculty teaching these courses should have relevant qualifications in these areas.

Using Tested Experience as a Basis for Determining Minimally Qualified Faculty

Assumed Practice B.2 allows an institution to determine that a faculty member is qualified based on experience that the institution determines is equivalent to the degree it would otherwise require for a faculty position. This experience should be *tested experience* in that it includes a breadth and depth of experience outside of the classroom in real-world situations relevant to the discipline in which the faculty member would be teaching. An institution that intends to use tested experience as a basis for hiring faculty must have a well-defined policy and procedure for determining when such experience is sufficient to determine that the faculty member has the expertise necessary to teach students in that discipline.

The value of using tested experience to determine minimal faculty qualifications, as referenced in Assumed Practice B.2.a., depends upon the relevance of the experience both to the degree level and to the specific content of the courses for which the faculty member is responsible. In their policies on tested experience as a basis for hiring faculty members, institutions are encouraged to develop faculty hiring qualifications that outline a minimum threshold of experience and a system of evaluation which could include the skill sets, types of certifications or additional credentials, and experiences that would meet tested experience requirements for specific disciplines and programs. These stated qualifications would ensure consistency in hiring and provide transparency in hiring and human resources policies. The faculty hiring qualifications related to tested experience should be reviewed and approved through the faculty governance process at the institution.

Determining Minimally Qualified Faculty in the Context of Dual Credit

The subject of dual credit was the focus of HLC's national study completed in 2012. This research entailed the analysis

of dual credit activities across 48 states and revealed the dramatic expansion of dual credit offerings. Citing research conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, HLC's study reported that by 2010-2011 dual credit enrollments had reached 2.04 million students from 1.16 million in 2002-2003, an increase of 75 percent. Even though the study was a descriptive analysis of dual credit and therefore by design did not advocate a position, it did report on both the benefits and the drawbacks of dual credit programs and prompted the accrediting agency to address some critical concerns. Inadequate instructor qualification was listed among the principal concerns. (See *Dual Credit for Institutions and Peer Reviewers* for additional information.)

Against the backdrop of rapid expansion of dual credit programs and growing concerns over minimal faculty qualifications for teaching dual credit courses, HLC determined that institutions that award college credit by means of dual credit arrangements must assure the quality and integrity of such programs and their comparability to the same programs offered on the institution's main campus or at the institution's other locations. These expectations extend to minimally qualified dual credit faculty, as stated in Criterion Three (3.A., 3.C.2.) and Criterion Four (4.A.4.). Assumed Practice B.2. is also applicable and subject to review in relation to dual credit offerings.

The institution must assure that the faculty members teaching dual credit courses hold the same minimal qualifications as the faculty teaching on its own campus. This requirement is not intended to discount or in any way diminish the experience that the high school teacher brings into a dual credit classroom. Yet it is critical that the content of the dual credit course match the complexity and scholarly rigor of the same course delivered to the student population on the college campus. With millions of high school students now earning college credit through dual credit programs, the advancement of higher education and the value of student learning rely extensively on the adequacy of faculty preparation and demonstrated qualifications among dual credit instructors.

What is Dual Credit?

Dual credit refers to courses taught to high school students at the high school for which the students receive both high school credit and college credit. These courses or programs are

offered under a variety of names; HLC's Criteria on "dual credit" apply to all of them as they involve the accredited institution's responsibility for the quality of its offerings.

HLC's Review of Faculty Qualifications Related to the Revised Assumed Practice

Beginning on September 1, 2017, the revised Assumed Practice B.2., in addition to the Criteria and Core Components, will be used to inform peer reviewers' interpretation of HLC's expectations around faculty qualifications. Prior to September 1, 2017, the Assumed Practice dealing with minimal faculty qualifications as currently in effect will apply to all institutions. Peer reviewers will **not** be referencing the revised Assumed Practice in any written report prepared for HLC or using the revised version of the Assumed Practice to evaluate the extent of any institution's compliance with HLC's requirements in this area until the effective date of the revised policy. As a result, no institution will be subject to consequences arising from concerns related to the extent of its compliance with the revised Assumed Practice prior to the effective date of September 1, 2017.

The following section highlights routine and specific circumstances under which the revised Assumed Practice, once effective, will influence the review of an institution. These descriptors are intentionally brief.

Routine Circumstances

Institutions hosting comprehensive evaluations

Institutions in good standing hosting routine comprehensive evaluations, whether on the Standard, AQIP or Open Pathway, need not write specifically to the Assumed Practices as a general rule. However, all institutions preparing for a comprehensive evaluation must write specifically to Core Component 3.C. Peer review teams conducting comprehensive evaluations may randomly select a sample of faculty members and request to see their personnel records (i.e., curriculum vitae and transcripts) in conjunction with the list of courses to which said faculty members are assigned. Peer reviewers may also legitimately probe what process the institution uses to determine that its faculty members are appropriately credentialed to teach the courses to which they are assigned. Likewise, reviewers may evaluate the institution's policies and procedures for determining qualified faculty, particularly when equivalent experience is used as the measure of qualification.

Institutions subject to interim monitoring or on Notice related to Core Component 3.C.

As of September 1, 2017, those institutions identified as at-risk of non-compliance with Core Component 3.C. (i.e., placed on Notice) and those institutions subject to interim monitoring related to Core Component 3.C. should take the revised Assumed Practice on faculty qualifications into account in their Notice or Interim report (as applicable). This means that the revised Assumed Practice should inform the institution's interpretation of sufficiency of faculty for purposes of writing to Core Component 3.C. and for determining whether faculty members are "appropriately qualified."

Although institutions on Notice or subject to monitoring on the basis of Core Component 3.C. must write explicitly to that Core Component prior to September 1, 2017, institutions on Notice or subject to interim monitoring on that basis need not write explicitly to the revised Assumed Practice unless explicitly called upon to do so by an action letter issued by the Board or the Institutional Actions Council, as applicable. Peer review processes for evaluating faculty qualifications will mirror those described in the preceding section.

Institutions that receive complaints related to faculty

After September 1, 2017, HLC may inquire about conformity with the revised Assumed Practice if a complaint is received about the credentials of an institution's faculty members. Following HLC's complaint protocol, this inquiry may take place even though the institution has not yet hosted a comprehensive evaluation after the revised Assumed Practice became effective. In conjunction with that review, HLC may ask to review the institution's policy on faculty qualifications and the credentials of specific faculty members, as well as the courses they teach. The outcome of that complaint review may be a determination by HLC that the institution is not in conformity with the revised Assumed Practice, in which case HLC will follow the protocol explained on page six.

Special Circumstances

The following types of institutions are always expected to write explicitly to the Assumed Practice on Faculty Qualifications (whether as stated currently or as revised when

effective). Institutions seeking accreditation or on a Show-Cause order always write explicitly to *all* Assumed Practices.

- Institutions under Special Monitoring related to Faculty Qualifications.
- Institutions out of compliance with Core Component 3.C.
- Institutions seeking accreditation.
- Institutions on a Show-Cause Order.

Institutions Not in Conformity with the Revised Assumed Practice after September 1, 2017

Should an institution be found not to be in conformity with the revised Assumed Practice B.2. after September 1, 2017, HLC will require the institution to file an interim report no more than three months after final HLC action. The interim report shall describe the institution's plan to rectify the issue. Depending upon the extent and nature of the deficiency, the report will either demonstrate that the situation has been rectified, or it will indicate how the situation will be rectified within a period of no more than two years. The latter case will require additional follow-up in the form of an on-site evaluation to confirm the issue has been fully remedied and the institution is in full compliance. An institution determined by HLC to be acting in good faith to meet the revised Assumed Practice after September 1, 2017, will not be at risk of losing its accreditation solely related to its conformity with Assumed Practice B.2.

Limitations on the Application of HLC Requirements Related to Qualified Faculty

It is important that institutions review these limitations carefully in implementing HLC's requirements related to qualified faculty:

- HLC requirements related to qualified faculty, including recent revisions to Assumed Practice B.2., are in no way a mandate from HLC to terminate or no longer renew contracts with current faculty members. HLC fully expects that institutions will work with current faculty who are otherwise performing well to ensure that they meet HLC's requirements, including its recently revised Assumed Practice. HLC also expects that institutions will honor existing contracts with


individual faculty or collective bargaining units until such time as institutions have had an opportunity under the contract to renegotiate provisions that relate to faculty credentials if such revisions to the contract are necessary for the institution to meet HLC's requirements. HLC recognizes that in many cases such renegotiation or revision may not be able to take place until the contract expires or at the contract's next renewal date.

- As a part of its ongoing evaluation of faculty, institutions may determine that there need to be changes in faculty hiring requirements pursuant to best (and emerging) practices in higher education related to faculty (not necessarily related to HLC's requirements) and to new or existing institutional policies in this regard. Institutions may also determine that certain faculty members have not performed well according to the expectations of the institution related to faculty performance and should not be retained. Such decisions are within the institution's purview. They should not be handled differently than they would have been in the past, prior to the promulgation of the revised Assumed Practice B.2. Under no circumstances should institutions use HLC's requirements, including the revised Assumed Practice B.2., as a pretext to eliminate faculty members who have not performed well or do not meet institutional hiring requirements for faculty members and would otherwise have not been retained for these reasons.
- As stated throughout this document, the implementation date for the revised Assumed Practice B.2. is September 1, 2017. No institution will be held accountable for compliance with the revised Assumed Practice in any HLC evaluation prior to that date. Institutions are free to set a more aggressive timetable for compliance with this revised requirement, but must make clear to the institutional community that the more aggressive timetable is their timetable, not that of HLC.
- These requirements, including recent changes to Assumed Practice B.2., in no way apply to staff members at accredited institutions; **they apply to faculty only**. To understand HLC's requirements related to staff members, institutions should review subcomponent 3.C.6, that states "staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising, and co-

curricular activities, are appropriately qualified, trained, and supported in their professional development.” HLC has no further requirements identifying what the appropriate qualifications are for staff members; rather, it is up to each accredited institution to determine what appropriate qualifications are for such personnel.

Summary

A fundamental factor in quality assurance, the central tenet of HLC’s mission, is having appropriately qualified faculty for the instructional and other roles faculty perform. It is critical that faculty possess suitable

credentials with currency in their respective disciplines for the courses or programs in which they teach for the sake of students, so that they are exposed to pertinent knowledge and skills not only while in college but also for their success later in life; for the parents who invest a great deal in them; for other institutions of higher education where those students may transfer; and for the society in general. In these guidelines, HLC has set forth minimal expectations for the faculty at accredited institutions in order to comply with the relevant Criteria for Accreditation and Assumed Practices. 

APPOINTMENT TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO COLORADO SPRINGS

The UCCS Graduate Faculty of the _____
Department; School or College

recommends the appointment of _____
First and Last Name

to the graduate faculty as a _____ member for the period:
*Regular or Special**

_____ to _____
Start Term (semester and year) End Term (semester and year)

*Tenured, tenure-track faculty, and clinical faculty may serve in regular appointments. Others may be appointed in a regular appointment upon approval of the Graduate Executive Committee. Special appointments are not allowed to serve as chair of committees unless specifically approved by the Graduate School Dean. Special appointments may be made for periods up to 3 years and only for specific assignments related to specific expertise.

Please list specific duties required of faculty with Special appointments:

_____ Teaching; ***list specific graduate courses with title and course number*** (please indicate if master's or doctoral level courses):

_____ Serving on student thesis/dissertation/capstone/examination committees; ***list specific students or projects:***

_____ Supervising student thesis, dissertation, capstone, or clinical doctoral project; ***list specific students:***

Current *vitae* must accompany all appointments. Attach supporting materials. If faculty do not have terminal degree in the field, a letter outlining the expertise and reasons for consideration should be included.

RECOMMENDATION:

Date _____

Graduate Program Advisor

Date _____

Department Chairperson

Date _____

College/ School Dean

APPROVAL:

Date: _____ Approved _____
Disapproved _____

Dean of the Graduate School

Please return this form and supporting documents to the UCCS Graduate School Office
(Academic Office Building 106 or by email to gradinfo@uccs.edu)

UCCS Out-of-state Merit Scholarship for Graduate Students (\$120,000 total amount available for 2015-2016 academic year)

Scholarship Details

- 30 scholarships available
- Each scholarship is \$4000/year (\$2000/semester)
- Scholarships will be allocated from Graduate School to programs/department/college based on historical percentage of applications from non-resident students and targeted growth programs. For departments with small numbers of students/nonresidents, the college will receive a pool with which to allocate scholarships. The college may ask the Graduate school to distribute the scholarships.
- Academic units may determine additional merit criteria beyond the minimum set below for awarding scholarships
- Scholarships are given to **new** students for two consecutive semesters which may be in different academic years (may be spread over 3 semesters if programs expect summer enrollment but total amount of scholarship is the same)
- Scholarship awardees must be identified by June 30 prior to new academic year; any unused scholarships will be returned to the graduate school and either given to other programs to use or returned to the Financial Aid Office to be used for graduate students with unmet need.
- Programs/Departments/Colleges must submit names of awardees to graduate school who will notify financial aid by June 30. Programs should check that students meet the eligibility requirements (enrollment requirements will be checked once courses start by the financial aid office).
- Programs must provide a brief narrative to graduate school on how this helped to recruit students (due by June 30).
- Minimum Eligibility Criteria
 - Graduate Student enrolled full time (5 or more credit hours) in a UCCS graduate program
 - First year graduate student who has a 3.5 or greater undergraduate GPA. Programs may use a different GPA standard for international students who attended an international institution of higher education that does not quite fit the same standards as the US system; however, these are scholarships for the best students.
 - Students must be paying full nonresident tuition rate (students paying reduced nonresident rate due to WRGP, military, extended studies, etc. are not eligible). International students paying full nonresident tuition rates are eligible. Departments may petition the Graduate School to give this scholarship to an international student with high need in any year of study as international students are never eligible to pay resident tuition.
- Department Requirements
 - Submit to the graduate school a list of students with name, mailing address, email, and student id number for each awardee by June 30, 2015.
 - Submit by June 30, 2015 to the graduate school a brief description on the usefulness of these awards for recruiting students. Since this is a new way of giving out scholarships we want to assess if this is a meaningful way of recruiting students or whether changes need to be made.



Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP)

WRGP Nomination Procedure for 2016-17

Submission Deadline: Friday, November 20, 2015

About WRGP

The Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP) is an exceptional educational resource for the West that allows master's, graduate certificate, and Ph.D. students who are residents of the participating WICHE states to enroll in some 380 high-quality programs at 60 participating institutions and pay resident tuition. WICHE members are the states of Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. In fall 2014, 1,345 students enrolled through WRGP and saved an estimated \$19.9 million dollars in tuition.

WRGP is a tuition reciprocity arrangement similar to the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE). Students can enroll directly in the program through WRGP and do not require the approval of their home state to participate, because the student's home state does not provide funding for each individual student. This represents a tremendous opportunity for Western states to share distinctive programs (and the faculty who teach them) and build their workforce in a variety of disciplines, particularly healthcare. Visit www.wiche.edu/wrgp for more information.

Institutions can nominate their graduate programs for participation in WRGP. To be eligible, programs that aren't related to healthcare must be "distinctive," meaning they must be offered at no more than four other institutions in the WICHE region (exclusive of California). Given the tremendous needs in the healthcare workforce, healthcare-related programs are not subject to the "distinctiveness" criteria, but must be of high quality.

WICHE is particularly interested in reviewing nominations for high need and emerging field programs, including but not limited to:

1. Professional Science Masters (PSMs)
2. Graduate certificate programs in emerging fields
3. Microtechnology and nanotechnology
4. Green building and building energy conservation
5. Emerging media and communications
6. Biotechnology and bioinformatics
7. Computer and cyber security
8. Alternative energy technology and sustainability
9. Geospatial technology

"We have been very pleased with the quality of WRGP applicants to our program. The continual increase in tuition has made higher education in the health sciences out of reach for many students, but WRGP makes it more accessible and affordable. WRGP demonstrates that learning passes well beyond the boundaries of individual states, as do the benefits of education."

*- Tony Seikel, Professor &
Associate Dean, Idaho State University*

10. Market research, data mining, data science and analytics
11. User experience (UX) design and management
12. Homeland security and emergency and disaster management
13. Healthcare fields not offered through WICHE's PSEP (www.wiche.edu/psep), including elder care specialists.

Program eligibility requirements

To be included in the Western Regional Graduate Program, a graduate program must:

1. Be offered by a regionally-accredited institution in a WICHE state. Member states include Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.
2. Be a program of high quality and demonstrable strength in terms of faculty, curriculum, library or other resources, student enrollments and placements, or other factors.
3. Be distinctive with respect to total program, specialization, or resources, and fill a need not met by more than four other (five total) public programs in the participating states (excluding programs available in California).

NOTE: Healthcare-related programs are exempt from the distinctiveness requirement. Programs outside of the healthcare field that reflect significant workforce needs within the WICHE region are exempt as well. WICHE staff will review and recommend these special high-need nominations for state approval.

4. Be in a field not included in the WICHE Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP). There are some exceptions to this rule. WICHE staff supports the inclusion of post-professional programs that serve to educate future faculty. For a list of fields included in PSEP, visit www.wiche.edu/psep.
5. Enjoy strong institutional support and the expectation of continued support.
6. Give some degree of admissions preference to qualified students from participating states.

"I appreciate this program for the flexibility it has offered me and my family. I needed to get an official endorsement to be a teacher of the visually impaired, which is not offered in the State of Alaska. I have a family and a job, so leaving the state was not an option. Portland State University offers one of only three online programs that would allow me to get my endorsement and not leave Alaska. WRGP solidified my decision to study with PSU; it made my pursuit affordable, and I did not need to pay for housing or leave my family. I could also continue to serve the visually impaired community in my state while working. Thank you for this opportunity."

– Phillis, Alaska resident, Class of 2013, Portland State University, Teacher of the Visually Impaired

7. **Agree to charge students from participating states no more than resident tuition at public institutions.** All WRGP programs must agree to hold WRGP students harmless in event that the program ceases to be part of WRGP.
8. Agree to participation terms as outlined in the “WRGP Administrative Guidelines”. Please see the last pages of this document for details.

How to nominate your program for participation in WRGP

Please use the WRGP nomination form posted on WICHE’s website at www.wiche.edu/wrgp. Your nomination must include all three items listed below:

1. Contact information and a program summary. Please use the form provided. Save it to your computer before completing it, and include it as one of your file attachments.
2. A letter of support from the dean of graduate studies, provost, or vice president of academic affairs. The letter should affirm the institution’s support of your department’s WRGP nomination *and* acknowledge the institution’s willingness to charge WRGP students resident tuition without additional support from the enrolling student’s home state.
3. Appendices that include: a copy of the catalog description of the program; a list of required courses; faculty qualifications; and, any recent program reviews. Please see the WRGP application form for more detail.

Review process and notification of approval

1. Nominations are due by **Friday, November 20, 2015**. Please email nominations as a file attachment to knawrocki@wiche.edu.
2. WICHE staff will compile nominations and verify distinctiveness of non-healthcare related programs. Summaries of the nominated programs are then sent to WICHE state higher education offices for review in late January 2016. State office comments are due to WICHE by early February 2016.
3. WICHE staff reviews state office comments and communicates any state office concerns to nominating programs. Staff then finalizes a list of eligible programs for final approval. The list is sent to WICHE regional State Higher Education Offices in March 2016.
4. Approved programs will be notified in March/April 2016. New programs may begin enrolling students at the WRGP rate for the 2016-17 academic year, or the following academic year.

“Thanks to WRGP, I was able to enroll in the clinical doctorate of audiology program at the University of Utah. With no program in Wyoming, enrolling out-of-state was my only option. The University of Utah was my top choice due to its unique clinical training opportunities, excellent reputation, and nationally recognized medical and health science graduate programs. I am forever thankful for WRGP. Without it, I would not have been able to attend such an outstanding institution or to reach my dream career. Thanks to WICHE, I am able to give the gift of hearing – an intangible experience that won’t soon be forgotten!”

– Lauren, Wyoming resident, Class of 2015, University of Utah, Doctorate of Audiology

Tips for Demonstrating “Distinctiveness”

If the program you’re nominating falls outside of the healthcare¹ field, there are several resources that might help your institution to document its uniqueness:

1. **The College Navigator** website (<http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>) lists programs based on degree completions. It is a helpful site, but it may not include new programs. Make sure to search the WICHE states², and the correct degree type. Drill down as many “levels” as possible for the most precise CIP code match for your program. This will give you leads to the institutions that offer these programs. Then you can visit their websites to determine if your program is identical or different from theirs.
2. **The College Blue Book** is a good resource if your library carries it (available in hard copy and eBook). Please consult the “*Degrees Offered by College & Subject*” volume. Again, this is compiled by degree completions, so it may not include brand new programs
http://www.cengage.com/search/productOverview.do?N=197%204294916919&Ntk=P_EPI&Ntt=12242728576990099331264681486953748061&Ntx=mode+matchallpartial.
3. **Professional or programmatic accrediting agencies.** If your field has an agency responsible for accrediting specialized programs such as yours, check their website for links to existing programs in the WICHE states: <http://www.chea.org/Directories/special.asp>.
4. **Workforce and labor market websites.** If your program doesn’t fit the “distinctiveness criteria,” but there’s an established workforce need, below some resources that might help you document workforce need. Please remember to focus on the regional workforce needs of our western WICHE states.
 - U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Occupational Outlook Handbook: www.bls.gov/ooh
 - BURNING GLASS: www.burning-glass.com
 - RAND: www.rand.org
 - EMSI: www.economicmodeling.com

Kindly email us (mcolalancia@wiche.edu) if you turn up other helpful resources!

¹ WICHE defines “healthcare” broadly; we will also consider graduate degrees that do not lead to direct patient contact. Degrees in research fields that contribute to healthcare, or majors in healthcare administration are also considered to be part of “healthcare”. Healthcare related programs are not required to demonstrate uniqueness, because the workforce need is so substantial.

² WICHE States are: AK, AZ, CA, CNMI, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, NM, ND, OR, SD, UT, WA, and WY.

WRGP Administrative Guidelines

1. **WRGP TUITION RATE.** To participate in WRGP, programs must charge students no more than resident tuition and hold students harmless in the event that the program ceases to be part of WRGP. It is important that you coordinate students' WRGP status with the bursar's office so that they are charged the correct tuition rate. Please note that the receiving institution/department does not receive support fees for WRGP students; WRGP is purely a tuition reciprocity agreement that helps departments build robust programs by diversifying their student enrollment and fill seats in distinct programs that might otherwise go unfilled.
2. **ADMISSIONS PROCESS.** Students apply for the reduced WRGP tuition rate when they apply for admission to your program. They apply directly through your department or graduate school. We encourage your department to follow or establish a common internal WRGP protocol for all WRGP graduate programs offered at your institution, in partnership with your graduate admissions staff. We also encourage you to consult and coordinate with your graduate studies department, registrar, bursar's office, financial aid office and residency office as well, so that they may also answer applicants' questions or refer them to the correct individual in your department.
3. **RESIDENCY VERIFICATION.** To qualify for the WRGP tuition rate, students must prove to your department or residency office's satisfaction that they are residents of a WICHE state at the time of application. Because there are no dollars paid by the student's home state, residency verification is not done by the student's home state. Once in a while, an applicant's residency status may be unclear. For those rare cases, the state higher education department (or equivalent) in the student's home state may be of assistance. You may also call our office for additional guidance if you wish.
4. **ADMISSIONS PREFERENCE.** We ask that you give some degree of admissions preference to qualified students from WICHE states. The WICHE states include Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wyoming, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.
5. **WRGP ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS.** Your department sets the admissions requirements for applicants applying for the WRGP rate, as well as any special WRGP application deadlines. If these requirements differ from your standard requirements (a higher GPA, for example), please indicate this in your WRGP online profile.
6. **WRGP PROGRAMS OFFERED ONLINE:** Institutions offering WRGP programs online (partially or fully), are responsible for obtaining authorization to offer distance education in the state where the enrolled WRGP student resides. SHEEO's (State Higher Education Executive Officers Association) State Authorization Surveys is a useful resource for contacts:
http://sheeo.org/sheeo_surveys/.

Although there are at present no federal rules regarding state authorization of postsecondary distance education, most all states have legislation or regulations on this issue and every institution should comply with laws in the states in which it enrolls students.

An alternative to this state-by-state approach is being implemented. The State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) is an agreement among member states, districts and territories that establishes comparable national standards for interstate offering of postsecondary distance education courses and programs. It is intended to make it easier for students to take online courses offered by postsecondary institutions based in another state. SARA is overseen by a National Council and administered by four regional education compacts. We encourage you to read more about the State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements (SARA; www.nc-sara.org) and support your state's participation in the initiative.

SARA minimizes the complexity of regulation at the state level, reduces costs for institutions, increases access to distance education and expands protections for students. WICHE member states of SARA as of May 12, 2015 are: Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, North Dakota (joined under MHEC—the Midwestern Higher Education Compact), South Dakota, Washington and Wyoming.

To learn more, contact John Lopez, SARA Director for the WICHE region, at 303.541.0277 or jlopez@wiche.edu.

7. **NUMBER OF WRGP SEATS OFFERED ANNUALLY.** To participate in WRGP, your program must offer the WRGP discounted rate to at least one or more qualified new applicants each academic year. We encourage you to offer more discounted WRGP seats, especially if your graduate program is a large one.
8. **ENROLLMENT REPORTING.** WICHE requests WRGP enrollment information every fall. We will send the initial request to your institutional contact person who is responsible for reporting the number of WRGP students enrolled in your program and their home state. It is important that your department or registrar code these students as “WRGP” so they can be tracked easily. We do not ask for individual student names; enrollment trackers only report the number of students (by their home state) enrolled in your program (i.e.: 2 AK students, 1 AZ student, 0 CO students, etc.).
9. **WITHDRAWAL FROM WRGP.** In the event that a program decides to leave WRGP, we ask they give WICHE a year's notice, and that they hold continuing students harmless, charging them the reduced WRGP tuition rate until graduation.

More information about WRGP

For more information about WRGP, please visit the WRGP website at www.wiche.edu/wrgp. We encourage you to read the administrator and student testimonials about the benefits of participating in the WRGP network. Please see <http://www.wiche.edu/adminTestimonials> and [http://www.wiche.edu/studentTestimonials?field_testimonial_program_value_many_to_one\[\]=WRGP](http://www.wiche.edu/studentTestimonials?field_testimonial_program_value_many_to_one[]=WRGP).

For questions about this nominations round, please contact Kim Nawrocki at 303.541.0270 or knawrocki@wiche.edu or Margo Colalancia at 303.541.0214 or mcolalancia@wiche.edu.